CROATAN

MARY JOHNSTON

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CROATAN

By Mary Johnston

SILVER CROSS

1492

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By

MARY JOHNSTON

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CHAPTER I

SETTLERS FOR VIRGINIA

MAY FIFTH, 1587, Christopher Guest came into Plymouth from Exeter way, he and his man Anthony Little; both were well mounted, and a led horse carried effects of Guest's. Behind him lay Old Hall and crippled Sir William and Dame Philippa, his parents, and three sisters, and a countryside that he quite enduringly loved, though for ten years he had seen little of it. Will Guest, his elder brother, was in London, well placed in the Queen's household. Farewells had been said. An agent in Plymouth would take and return the horses.

Guest and his man were for the *Lion,* due now from Portsmouth, Captain John White's ship going with settlers to Virginia. There would be two small ships beside, and all three were found by Sir Walter Raleigh, who had the patent for all that new land across the gray sea. Christopher Guest, aged twenty-seven, was going with White, but he hardly thought that he would settle in Virginia. Go, observe, find something valuable—wasn't experience the most valuable thing in the

world?—and return! But he was pledged to stay at least three years, until the colony should be upon its feet, stable, and replenished from home.

Anthony Little had a good singing voice, and now came in undertone:

"Old England is a merry land—"

Christopher turned head. "Let it out, Anthony! I'll sing, too.

"Old England is a merry land,
All washen by the sea—"

They sang and all the morning seemed to join. "Now let's carry it on!

"Virginia is a fair, merry land"

(Though we know precious little about her!)

"Virginia is a fair merry land
And a fair, merry land is she!
To her we'll go,
From her we'll come,
With gold shall make us free!"

"Yon's Plymouth," said Anthony Little, "and the ocean we'll sail.—Even if he likes it so that he choose to dwell there and raise his family there, I reckon, Master Christopher, a man might come back two or three times in his life, just to see the old land and home folk?"

"Surely!" answered the other. "From now on there'll be sailing more and more ships."

He had checked his horse and sat, half-turned in his saddle, gazing from this hilltop upon Plymouth and blue sea. He was a tall, broad-shouldered young man, strong and fair, with gray eyes. The nose was slightly aquiline, the mouth good, the forehead ample. His voice suited animals, children and most men and women. Behind him lay a very considerable stretch of experience, both of a sorrowful and a happy sort.

He and Little gazed upon Plymouth and the sea. Around, afar, spread great loveliness, and the stir and perfume of home. Anthony Little thought of wife and children whom he was leaving, meaning to bring them in two years, if it were fit, to Virginia. Christopher Guest thought of Old Hall, and mother and father and sisters, and of Will in London, and of Edmund Howison, his friend, and of Marian Leigh, who would not marry him because Edmund was dearer to her.

He supposed that he was leaving England, going to Virginia, because of Marian and Edmund. Yet, in the five months since he had talked at length with Captain John White and had listened respectfully to Sir Walter Raleigh, saying a very few words for himself, the tremendous pain just there had certainly lessened. Undoubtedly so. He had a candid mind and must seek truth, even about himself. It was all mixed up, he supposed, —Marian and gold and adventure, sheer restless-

ness and desire for novelty. Leave England, go to Virginia—

He sat his horse and stared at the sea. There were ships riding in harbor, but he looked beyond them to the silver and blue rim of his world. Go over the rim,—for what and why?

He drew the back of his hand slowly across his brow, this being with him an habitual gesture. "I suppose the Something more than length and breadth and thickness knows! Anyhow, I'm going!"

Guest and Anthony Little and the led horse came into Plymouth, to the Rose and Crown Inn. Here, in the inn yard, were loungers to regard with interest the arriving. The same had been true of Plymouth streets. "'Tis Christopher Guest from Old Hall by Exeter. I know him! 'Tis Anthony Little, his man. They're going to Virginia, where's no Christian man nor woman nor even a little child!"

Anthony looked after the horses. Christopher walked into the Rose and Crown, where the host met him and the drawer followed the host with ale. "Master Swift, is the *Lion* in port?"

"Nay, not yet, sir! But to-morrow, they say, at latest, sir. The *Lion* and the *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess,* and the London people that's going in them. There's threescore, sir, in Plymouth, waiting."

"Is Sir Walter Raleigh in town?"

"Aye, indeed, sir, he is so! Yon's his room

with the great window. But he's at the bowling green playing with other knights."

Christopher Guest ate his dinner, washed face and hands and walked forth to view the sights. Water craft in number, small ships and larger ships, lay before the town; the town was busy; it breathed a high, lilting day of May. He had been in Plymouth more than twice or thrice, but not for several years, and most of the faces he met or passed were strange to him. He sauntered, using his eyes and his ears. He thought, "Better make the best of the time! Before three years are out I shall be hungry for an English town."

He moved about or lingered here and there for an hour. At last, in a sunny space of wall above the Catwater, he came upon four or five men basking and talking. He caught, "Well, and why not? I tell ye, the New Jerusalem builds everywhere! If everywhere, then of course in Virginia, too."

"And being a stonemason, you'll be building at it?"

"And being a mason *inside,* Tom Darnel, I'll build still—under and in the Lord that is the Builder. Aye!"

"Well, I'm going to Virginia," spoke Tom Darnel, "to see what I can get out of it! Sir Walter swears we'll all be double rich!"

A third spoke. "Martin Spendlove's going to get out of trouble—"

"Aye, ye give," answered the stonemason, "this

reason, that and the other! But the Master Builder saith, 'I have my purposes—and ye'll go!' "

Guest looked with interest at the speaker. The man was almost a giant, not much the younger side of fifty, with a face tanned and lined, and a great brown beard. His hands showed a stone-mason's hands; he had beside him on the wall a book. Christopher came into the group.

"Well, my masters, I am going, too, to Virginia. My name's Christopher Guest."

"I am glad to know you, sir," answered the mason. "Mine is Matthew Fullwood."

"You're among the gentry," said Tom Darnel.

Guest answered, "Gentry is as gentry does. It's all one, I think!"

Fullwood looked at him approvingly. "Aye, aye, that's verse and chapter!"

Tom Darnel said, "What do you think, sir, of it all, and shall we come out alive?"

Guest leaned against the sea wall, in the sun, between blue sea and heaven. "Why, in the end we'll come out alive.—We're moving over a stream. England's moving over a stream."

One of the men who were not going said, "Fearsome lonely—that's what I think you'll be, Tom Darnel and all of you! There isn't any one in Virginia to welcome you."

"That's not quite so," Guest answered. "Sir Richard Grenville left fifteen men on Roanoke. He says they are stout Englishmen. They'll have

a little fort and two or three houses for us to begin with."

"It'll be small by Plymouth town," persisted the Plymouth man. "Plymouth and London and England and Devon'll look good to you, looking back!"

"Aye, no doubt!" answered Christopher Guest. "But wide sea and strange land and new fortunes are likewise good."

He lifted arms from wall. "I won't say good-by, then, Master Fullwood and Tom Darnel, though now I'm going to the Rose and Crown."

In the late, bright afternoon he returned to the tavern. Anthony Little made report about the horses. "And I went, too, Master Christopher, to the Thistle Inn. There be twenty there that are going to Virginia—and, Lord, it's a sight to see and hear them and all the kin and friends that's come to take farewell! There are two carpenters, and Dick the Ploughman—three of him—a smith and a malster and a miller and God knows who beside! and three-four wives. After all, Margery and the children might have come now. It's a fair, decent lot, Master Christopher! I haven't seen a swashbuckler nor one that's been gaol bird."

"Sir Walter said he wouldn't have such.—Well, Tony, we'll have Margery and your babes out next year."

He looked from window that gave upon the garden of the Rose and Crown. The sun rode an

hour high and the May light upon white thorn and daffodils, green turf and an ancient oak had power to entice and hold. "I'll go forth again," said Christopher, and walked into the garden.

The oak tree might have been an acorn in the Conqueror's time. A bench was built around the huge bole. Christopher, coming up the path, found here those who had been hidden by the trunk; namely, a young man and woman, seated to enjoy the sunset and a dish of apples on a table before them. They had been talking, but now were set quietly, their eyes upon the Devon garden, in the Devon light.

Christopher, making a gesture of courtesy, would have gone by, but the man spoke. "You are Master Guest from Exeter, are you not? Swift told us that you were here."

"Yes, I am Christopher Guest, at your service."

The slender, dark young man went on. "I am Gilbert Darling from beyond Bideford. This is my wife, Mistress Cecily Darling.—We are shipmates and Virginians together, so sit and talk!"

He pushed the dish of apples toward the taller, broader man.

"Captain White told me of you," said Christopher. "I am glad to become acquainted."

The slender, dark young man had a pleasing face and air, alike pensive and manly. When it came to Mistress Cecily Darling, she was a rose for warm, good looks, and an oak for vigor. Out of brown eyes looked a bright spirit and a brave

one, a natural goodness and soundness like the apple she held in hand. She had a deep, sweet voice with a thrill in it, and she might be twenty-four.

They sat and talked, pleased, the three, with one another. Virginia—and Virginia—and Virginia. Devon and Sir Francis Drake and Sir Richard Grenville and Sir Walter Raleigh. Then in the warm light toward sunset, a certain intimacy growing upon them, they fell to speaking of their personal selves and their reasons for Virginia. Perhaps they kept back the deepest reasons. Christopher said nothing of Marian and Edmund, and the other two had probably their own reservations. But all the same, they became warm and comradely. An Adventure was rising before them, and a glow and sweetness rested upon Devon and England that they were quitting. And we are together, and we had better like one another!

A girl of eighteen, country-bred, farmer's daughter, comely and honest, entered the garden from the inn. She held in her arms a young child, a boy. Cecily Darling raised her voice, "Here, Susan—Miles, Miles, here is thy mother!"

Susan put down the child. He came straight, light and vigorous to the three beneath the oak. "Miles—Miles—Mother!"

"He will be the youngest Virginian," said his father with pride.

But Mistress Darling spoke with Elizabethan

frankness. "'Twill hardly be! The youngest Virginian goes with Eleanor and Ananias Dare, in Eleanor's body. 'Twill be born in Virginia, if so we're safely there come four months!"

Said Christopher, "Captain White told me when I saw him in London that his daughter and son-in-law would not leave him."

"Aye, all together, like Gilbert and Miles and me—and Susan."

"Ananias Dare is a fine man," said Gilbert, "though an out and out Puritan. So soon as we set sail we must drop 'Captain' John White and say 'His Honor, the Governor'—of the City of Raleigh in Virginia. Twelve Assistants, and Dare is one, and George Howe one, and I am another, and you are a fourth—"

"Yes," answered Guest. "We are to assist as best we can. It's an honor and an obligation."

As he spoke he lifted the boy and stood him on the table. "Why, here's a fine cockerel! Have you any language? Can you say your name?"

The boy laughed, smiting at his holder's doublet. "Miles Darling, England. Virginia, apple, Susan!"

Guest and the parents and Susan laughed. "Why, you're an assistant yourself, nothing less! How old is he, Mistress Darling?"

"Three last November. A hundred and fifty settlers. Seventeen women."

The boy, set down from table, ran up the path by cowslips and daffodils, Susan following him.

"I've talked," said Christopher presently, "with one who was with Captains Amadas and Barlowe when they first found the land for Sir Walter. He says it is low land, covered with the mightiest cedars and filled with grapes. There are all manner of birds and deer and conies and such like, but no harmful beasts, or he saw none. The Indians were not unfriendly."

"May they ever be friends!" cried the woman. "Else it were terrible!"

"Banish your dreads, Cis!" answered Gilbert Darling. "The Spaniards forever mistreat them, so when they can they strike back."

"We won't do that, will we?" she said. "Doing no wrong, let us be happy, sweet Jesus, in a fair, goodly land!"

A hurry of voices floated into the garden. A drawer appeared upon the path. "Masters and mistress! Master Swift says tell ye the *Lion* is sighted!"

CHAPTER II

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

PLYMOUTH lay in last, red sunlight, hills and sea and town, and all the boats in haven and all the folk. Everywhere went a buzzing and murmur, and some bell was ringing sweetly, and there rose the smell of the sea and also of wood smoke from a great field where brush was being burned. And there was a fresh coolness, the breath of the May night advancing by all roads and over the sea and down through the air.

Gilbert and Cecily Darling and Christopher Guest, bound for waterside, heard behind them a vibrant, rich voice, "Ho, there, to see the *Lion!* Wait and take me with you!"

"Sir Walter—"

They turned. Raleigh came toward them, behind him walking the Indian Manteo, brought by Ralph Lane from Virginia the year before. Manteo now was clothed like any decent serving man, but yet was he Indian, tall and copper-hued, with lank black hair and eagle nose and strange eagle eye and guttural voice, and English speech infrequent and broken. England was yet a great marvel to him and so were English folk. But in

the end, was it not earth, air and water, trees and beasts, men, women and children,—and none of these were strange! What they called a castle was wigwams piled together and grown huge. Ships were canoes that had received teaching from the Great Father. Manteo reasoned so, and piled up information for his tribe.

Plymouth marveled at the Indian, and all who might made occasion to speak to the red son of the forest. His answers were mirth and wonder to them. But it was in bounds, for Plymouth was an old sea-port, and so used to outlandishness. Manteo would return to Virginia. He saw, over Plymouth and the incoming *Lion* and the sea, a sandy shore, sandy islands, sandy main, great woods and a village. He was not sorry to go, not he! So he walked in England, a figure that, stripped of his decent sixteenth-century dress, could only be matched in England far back, far back, down and down the centuries.

All was a kind of cadenced hurry,—the sinking light, the voices. Christopher felt a slight dizziness. The *Lion*—the *Lion* is coming in—the *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess!*

Now Walter Raleigh was up with them. He was a great man in England, on the way to who knew what more of greatness? He stood and moved, only thirty-five, handsome, with dark, almond-shaped eyes and firm, red lips, and brown wavy hair and pointed beard. Vigor and grace marked him, and again vigor and grace. He

acted here, he acted there, he moved like a deer, but he had in him the lion too. Vigor and vigor and vigor, and grace, grace, grace! A dreamer also, a dreamer who intended at once to act upon his dream.

The three who had left the garden, younger than he and not famous, greeted him respectfully. They were all Devon folk together, but the Queen's favor clothed him in a splendid sunny atmosphere. Queen's favor, strongly helped out by his own qualities. He could wear alike jewels and honors and be neither less nor more magnificent thereby. He had fought in France, Ireland and the Low Countries. He was Warden of the Stanneries and had been Member of the Commons for Devon. The Queen had knighted him three years ago. He was wealthy, being endued with Desmond's land in Ireland and, this very year, with Babbington's land in England. He liked Journeys and Findings, and had a Statesman's notion of what to do with findings. The sea was his good mother and seamen his kindred. He had been in seafights. Humphrey Gilbert, dying so nobly with the *Squirrel* in the cold North, was his half-brother. Under the Crown, he was Lord now of Virginia. He was fitting out the three ships. White the Governor was accountable to him, and therefore White's Assistants also, and all the settlers. He was scholar and poet, and all the learned liked him. He had many faults, but the virtues overtopped.

So graceful and grace-loving was he that now he doffed his feathered hat and bent to kiss Cecily Darling's hand.

"Mistress Darling, may you find Virginia as fair, brave and good as England, this day, finds you!"

Rich color overspread Cis's face. "Ah, Sir Walter! we leave so much that is fair and brave behind!"

"And good?"

"Yes, yes! And good."

"Ah!" said Raleigh. "Let's ever keep ships under sail between us! One day I'll come to see you in Virginia."

"Then will we ring all the bells!"

He spoke to Darling and to Guest. "I think I am fortunate in this out-setting! Have you seen the fifty-odd in Plymouth, waiting for the ships?"

"Not the fifty, but a good many."

"If I were cast for a shipwreck and a desert island," said Raleigh, "I would not want better stuff, both homely and fine, around me!"

"Oh, there'll be flaws!" Darling answered. "And, begone omen!"

"I meant no such thing—how could I!" the other exclaimed. His dark eyes rested upon the younger, darker man. "When you sail, take Assurance and High Hope with you! It's the first rule."

They were well from the inn. A crowd was gathering, moving with them. "Sir Walter" and

"Sir Walter" and "Sir Walter!" Now was waterside and all Plymouth out, it seemed, and still the bells were ringing, and all the harbor and the open sea streaked and splashed with sunset. Full in it, coming in, moved and swelled a tall ship. "Oh, the good *Lion!*"—"Built at Hull—Two hundred tons"—"Aye, she's staunch! I've been in her to Muscovy and the Levant."

All crowded, all looked, hand over eyes. "She's a good 'un to fight Spain—" "Mon, Sir Richard says there isn't an English ship but'll have to be drawn and kept to fight her, come five years! She's Satan, and Rome's the Scarlet Woman!"

"The *Lion* of Hull! Yon's the *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess!*"

Ringing, ringing, all the bells, and far and near the splendid dyes of sunset. In came the *Lion* and she had music playing aboard. Down, the sails; over, the anchor. The *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess* followed,—the *Rosemary* hardly a hundred tons, and the *Little Bess* a mere babe. The *Lion* it was that held the eye, and now her longboat came out of her shadow and made the wharf and landing stair. A man neither tall nor short, old nor young, with a lined, thoughtful face, stepped forth. A woman cried out, "Captain John White, God bless 'ee!" and a man beside Christopher spoke in a deep, rumbling voice.

"Aye, he's a considerate seaman! But it's my admiration to see him draw! Red, naked Indians and the tobacco plant and their beasts and trees

and houses and bowmen and sorcerers! Then again, he can take a blank wall and a bit of chalk and in a minute make you laugh to hold your sides! And he can draw Sir Francis and Sir Richard and Sir Walter or any of them so that you'd know them if you met them at midnight. He can even draw the Queen's Majesty!"

John White, Governor-to-be of Raleigh's Colony, mounted the water steps. A young man, coming after him out of longboat, raised to the people above a pale, fine face. "That's his son-in-law, Ananias Dare."

Cecily's hand touched Christopher, standing nearest her. "It's Eleanor with him—look!"

A young woman in a long cloak stepped from the boat, Dare aiding. Christopher caught a glimpse of a fair face with great, dark eyes. The Governor and his family came up the steps, three or four men from the boat following. At the head Walter Raleigh met them. Greeting and greeting and again good greeting! "London" and "Portsmouth" and "One hundred and ten on board, above the crews and the masters—all well, all in good spirit!" and, "I have given permission to land and rest here in Plymouth the two days—'twould not do else!"

In the bright dusk Plymouth boats were bringing the hundred to land. Plymouth throats, a thousand of them, set up a cheer.

"The Virginia folk! Cheer for the brave!"

"Captain John White and the *Lion!*"

"The *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess!*"

"Sir Walter Raleigh—which is to say, cheer for Devon and for England!"

"Shout for Queen Bess!"

"Shout for Virginia that is her name-child!"

That night the Rose and Crown had not a chink unfilled, nor had the Thistle Tavern, nor the Lucky Seaman, and merchants and sea captains opened their houses. The Governor and his twelve Assistants, and Plymouth and Devon worthies beside, supped with Walter Raleigh. The Rose and Crown and Master Swift made it a great supper. So cheerful was the Rose and Crown and Plymouth that night!

The moon was shining. Christopher Guest knew what it was to have a certain stillness and gravity that was neither fatigue nor heaviness, descend upon him, no matter what the throng or how bright and moving the place. Now he felt the mood arrive. He slipped from his seat beside Darling. All were now at wine, and a knight from Taunton speaking for the third time about the Queen and the Kingdom and Spain and the New World.

Unseen, the quiet, big young man left the room. Outside was a bustle of serving men and women and hangers-on. These, too, he passed and put himself out of the garden door. The night was warm, the moon shone gloriously.

Big of frame, he yet was light of step. He went soundlessly up the path, meaning to sit beneath

the oak. But again, as in the afternoon, others were before him. He halted in the shade of a blossoming thorn. Two women sat there. In a moment he knew them for Cecily Darling and Eleanor Dare. A great rift among the oak branches let in the moon, streaming in silver over them. They sat entirely still, not speaking, seeming to regard the world within. Eleanor Dare was the slighter of the two, and worn perhaps with sea-faring, and moreover carrying life within her that taxed her life. She leaned against Cecily, her head resting upon her bosom. Their hands were intertwined; they seemed to sit as one piece, simple and strong and to-night a little sorrowful. The light bathed them; the great oak of England framed them. So moveless they sat! Something of the eternal entered. The man watching grew to himself eternal, and the night and day and England and Virginia eternal. Deep among some fruit trees a nightingale began to sing. Christopher moved and without sound left to the three the silver garden.

CHAPTER III

THE SHIPS

THE *Lion* and the *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess* had their adventures. In the Bay of Biscay a huge storm pounced upon them. All aboard thought to hear Death in the wind and to see him in the piled water. The *Rosemary* parted company, was beaten far away, quite out of knowledge or guessing. Simon Fernando, master of the *Lion,* had cark and care in his voice.

The storm passed. But off the Canaries came adventures, with a Portuguese ship and a French ship and an English ship. Adventure and delay. But after these a great, clear, open, azure sea, with a wind warm, steadfast and favorable.

Ananias Dare stood the chief of the twelve Assistants. A young Puritan, clear, high and cold. After him came Gilbert Darling, Christopher Guest, Peregrine Wren the Physician, Ambrose Viccars, Dionise Harvie, George Howe, Harry Donne and others.

The *Lion* and the *Little Bess* drove west by south before the trade wind, over a serene blue ocean. But the *Rosemary* was never sighted. They feared that she had drowned. But Simon

Fernando would have it that from the Portugal sea she had put back to Plymouth. Tired of the adventure! John White and the master of the *Lion* were at odds.

Fair weather and good health and the two ships keeping near, and men and women going up and down. Leaning over the side, they saw dolphins, and once there came flying fish at which Miles Darling shrieked and clapped his hands, and once they passed through a vast float as of flat molds of red jelly, and once after hurricane they marked with pleasure Saint Elmo's lights, and on dark nights the sea flashed with living tinsel.

Among the women upon the *Lion* we pick out Eleanor Dare, Cecily Darling, whom most called "Dame Cis", Elizabeth Viccars, Magdalen Harvie —these four gentlewomen—Mother Goode who was a strong soul, Joyce Archard, Eunice Cooper, Susan, Audrey Tappan and Winifred Rose.

The small boy, Miles Darling, was the darling of the ship. Out of all, beside his parents, his grandfather and Susan, his choice fell on Matthew Fullwood and Christopher Guest.

So favorable were wind and weather that the seamen had leisure to think of their lives. They had a chantey that some among the colonists would stand to harken:

Here we go, oh, here we go! Out sail! The Queen's a Lady, the Ocean's blue.—Lay her out! —Fie wind—lie wind—fly wind! Done, well done. Send us home—oh, send us home!

In the wide west, rosy rays flared up and spread afar, and among them hung cloud islands, saffron, umber, jacinth and rose.

Manteo, the Indian, had scholars who would wile the voyage and learn things useful to know in Virginia, and a useful tongue. Many a time this group and that brought Manteo to sit upon deck before them. He was nothing loth; he liked "chief circle." John White, the Governor, often interpreted and helped out, for he had been with Ralph Lane in that first slight tarrying in Virginia.

Virginia! Virginia never palled to them who were going thither. And was it this; and was it that? And how shall we fare and how will we accommodate? Hope cast everything in full rosy light. Had it not done so to a palpable degree they had not left England. And yet, while this heightening and beckoning was present, they did know of possible terror and loss. All together made for them a deep music and romance, and endlessly they were interested in what they might find. What was the aspect—what was the furnishing—what were the neighbors of Home-to-be?

Virginia! That to Manteo was an enormously long outward sand bar with breaks and entrances here and there into wide, quiet water, and in this water islands, and beyond these and more quiet water the Great Land that stretched forever, except that after very many days' marching you saw

mountains. These grew higher and higher, and the highest might—he did not know—end the Great Land and put you at once into the sky. But that was far, far away. In Virginia were towns and tribes. And all were "real" men as against "pale" men who presumably were but a dream, now a good and now a bad dream. So far Manteo had found the dream agreeable, was quite willing to have the dream folk return, Manteo whom they had rapt away returning with them. Wanchese, whom also they had taken, was dead.

"Real" men's land held many tribes, and the many were loosely thrown into two confederations, that continuously or fitfully warred the one with the other. Now it might be over land and hunting grounds, now over a breach of hospitality, now over a marriage out of order, now for needed women, now for nothing in the world but a taunting gesture or message. These tribes,—John White drew him out about these.

Heathenish names poured forth in Manteo's guttural. Iroquois, Algonquin—Cherokee, Usheree. The first two, it seemed, were the very great and general designations, but the last two would serve them for that part of Virginia including and back of Roanoke Island. Manteo was Cherokee, being—he spoke proudly—a Croatan. He manifested contempt for Usherees—all Usherees—but especially for Roanokes. It was true that in the islands and the land by the sea the Usherees were the vastly numerous folk. In

the main, Cherokees were hill and mountain tribes. But long ago certain Cherokees had come fighting down to the Great Water. Croatans were Cherokee, Croatans living on Croatan Island. Croatan young men were so brave and their old men so wise that they matched the Roanokes, for all their greater number. For quite a while there had not been war between Croatan and Roanoke,—not a war to amount to anything. But Croatan was watching all the same; Canacaught their prophet was watching.

Manteo began a chant of Croatan greatness. His strong voice rose and fell. It might have been an early, early Greek ship and some sample from a backward island vaunting, vaunting. The English could vaunt too.

The wind veered. There rose the seamen's chantey that the little lad, Miles, loved:

Here we go—oh, here we go! Haul in! The Queen's a Lady, the Ocean's blue. Make fast! Fie wind—lie wind—fly wind! All's done. Send us home—oh, send us home!

In Spanish seas they kept an outlook day and night for Spanish ships. Once there ran alarm and the guns were got ready and all aboard parceled to their places. But the galleon and her escort, for what reason they did not know, after a gesture of war, increased sail and went her way, all stately against the carnation sky. Twice again they made out sails, but none appeared to trouble about them.

"Has Francis Drake frighted them so, or do they think we are not worth their while?"

"I do not know. When Trouble passes it provokes me not that she would not stay!"

San Juan and Hispaniola lay invisible upon the south and east. They passed the Lucayas. Now they saw Florida coast but stood away from that and sailed north. Virginia coast hung ahead, but as yet beneath the horizon. Two months they were from Plymouth! By now they all knew one another very well. Miles Darling was two months older and bolder.

A small, bright world in himself, he bore down upon Christopher Guest and Fullwood, leaning against the rail. He careered into their arms. "Ho, Master! If you run like that, you'll make your round too quick!"

Miles Darling tugged at the great brown beard, then made an eaglet swoop for the chain that Christopher wore. "Tell a story! Tell a story!"

From mast-top rang a cry. "Land, ho! Land, ho!"

Simon Fernando passed. "Virginia coast!"

All upon the *Lion* crowded to look. It lay ahead, a long, low land, set under giant land and faery land in the sky. "Smell it, can't you? Flowers and pine trees—smell the land we're going to live in!"

Christopher raised Miles Darling upon his shoulder. "Here's the story, ladkin! It's beginning!"

CHAPTER IV

INDIANS

THEY never found the fifteen men left by Grenville to keep their place warm for them. No sound, no sight, no token, but disappearance and not even a grave to be seen! The rude fort was all dilapidated; the huts were standing, but in and out grew grass and vines and wild melons. They scared the deer from feeding on these.

No white man, nor apparently any Indian, on Roanoke Island, that was, maybe, a score of miles in length and six in breadth. White sand and white surf, and around the quiet water of the sound, and dim across the western stretch of this the trees of the continent. There whirred and screamed and flew myriads of sea fowl. Springs and runlets refreshed the English; all wondered at the many and goodly trees, the much wild fruit, the deer and various small, strange animals. As for the fish in the sound and the creeks and inlets, they might take forever, they thought, and make no impression. The air breathed warm but clear and fine, laden with salt. It was Virginia! It was their goal. But ah! such a loneliness, save for themselves. The eye clung to the ships as to

a bridge at the other end of which, though lost in mist, stood home. "We must make this home. We must make it home!" They said it to one another, but they said it half-heartedly.

Then came in the *Rosemary*. It was a holiday with shouts and quick laughter and tears when they beheld her sails, her shape, and knew her! In she came by the break in the outer bar, and rode beside the *Lion* and the *Little Bess*. Her voyage, after the storm, had been so and so. All her people were alive and well. Guest found Anthony Little; others their own friends.

They began to repair the huts whence the fifteen had disappeared and to build new and better houses. They would also build a fort. The sea had Spaniards. Virginia in its entirety held God knew how many Indians, who might be all friendly, or who might not! A week ashore—and not an Indian had they seen, save afar off one day in a long canoe. These had made signs of amity, but then they vanished.

Roanoke! White must go back to England, report to Sir Walter, gather supplies and new colonists, come again, not with one or two ships but with five or six. When more ships came and more, when there were hundreds and hundreds of English folk, then of course the mainland, across the bright sound! Enter the mainland and live there. Work northward also toward that Chesapeake of which Lane had heard rumors. Live there too. Possess little by little the land.

Hundreds and hundreds, and after a time count in thousands.

Simon Fernando wished to return to Plymouth at once with the *Lion*. This voyage had already been overlong. But White must wait to know the temper of the Indians. And also he would not go until his daughter was lightened of her child.

Days of bright weather and busy work upon the fort and the cabins. And no Indians on the island or coming to the island, and that perplexed. Then, with a suddenness, the first disaster! George Howe, one of the Assistants, a young man, vigorous, adventurous, would go exploring alone, or almost alone, for he took only a boy, his servant. A league from the City of Raleigh, entering a place of reeds, he was of a sudden shot full of arrows, fell and died. His assailants, boatload of Indians, took to their craft from which they had been fishing, and shot out of the creek, into the sound, across to the mainland. The boy, escaping, though with an arrow through his arm, told all.

It grew imperative to know more of the present mind of the people inhabiting before them. Manteo the Croatan advised, "Go ask Croatans!" White decided to send the pinnace and a dozen men under Captain John Stafford to the island of that name. Christopher Guest was of the party.

The boat made its way over the shallow, smooth,

blue sound. The sea was fair, the sea was known to Englishmen living always close to the sea. Flat islands, looming pines of these and of the mainland, looming till they seemed to grow straight out of water, the base-land invisible, were not so familiar. The sea fowl might not be numbered, and the fragrance of the ocean and the fragrance of the land contended as the wind blew. When they came to the marsh fringe of Croatan, the wind dropping, insects in clouds annoyed them. Beyond the marsh, enormous trees.

Manteo's village welcomed them. As Indian towns went it was a considerable one. Oblong, windowless huts, constructed from saplings and bark with hanging mats of reeds for doors, stood at random among great trees and garden patches. In these last grew melons and beans and tobacco. The communal maize fields, some acres in extent, rustled and waved behind a row of pines, enormously tall, odorous and sighing.

Under a mighty tree, in the middle of the town, the chief English and the chief Croatans sat and talked. From hand to hand there passed a long tobacco pipe, the bowl carved, the stem hung with feathers. Silence while each man sent forth a smoke puff, and silence for a moment when it came back to the hand of the chief, a tall man with sunken eyes and an old wound which yet troubled him. He rose and spoke, slowly, with gestures toward the sun, the sea and the English. Guest and Stafford and others had by now enough

of Manteo's tongue in large measure to understand. The speech was friendly. After the chief rose an old, old man, and this was Canacaught, fount of wisdom and prophet among the Croatans. Very venerable he was, tall and wrinkled, with great authority. The Indians listened to him with intensity; the English presently also. There was something of enchantment. He, too, was friendly, but he had other reasons than most.

Christopher's hand pressed the pine needles while he listened. The smell of the pines filling his nostrils became suddenly dear to him; so did the sunshine filtering down.

"It is the old, old sun. It is the old, old earth! Why, I could live on this side of the face of all, and be happy!" Holinshed's "Chronicles", at home in the east window, and he leaning over it. Some old Saxon Council circle under the oaks of early England. Old council, old debate!

"New men in the land, as once we were new men—and what is to be done about it? What is wisdom? What will be the course of events?"

"It is not so strange here," thought Christopher. "Nothing is strange. Things come freshly—afresh, that is all—freshly after absence."

He felt eyes upon him, and his own moved to meet them. They were the eyes of a young Indian, a man of his own age, who leaned against the tree. Tall and muscular, he looked a fine runner and hunter. Intelligence sat in his black eyes, his high features. Christopher saw that and saw

no unhappy, ferocious disposition. Something drew the two together. The young, almost nude, bronze man had listened closely to the old man speaking, then, regarding the English with a pondering look, came so to Christopher. In the instant, so incalculably match the natures in this world, there sprang or revived friendship. The Elizabethan felt it too. Gray eyes and black eyes looked calmly, sunnily, one pair into the other.

The conference ended. They were feasted, the English. The summer land seemed endlessly bountiful of food. They had venison, pigeons and fish, maize upon the ear, maize made into cakes with bear oil for butter; honey, plums, no wine but water with some infusion that colored it and imparted a not unpleasant wild tang and odor. They sat upon mats and ate, and the women afterwards brought water in gourds and poured it over their hands, giving them for napkins to dry with bunches of green leaves. Then more tobacco was smoked, and there was rest under the pines, with the singing salt wind in the boughs, in the maize fields at hand. Manteo had talked, Stafford and Guest had talked, and that well.

This night they rested in the Croatan town. Dawn broke with a lovely freshness. Breakfast, farewells, the boat in the creek, Indian company there, stately partings, blue water widening, and before them return to Roanoke. When presently they talked among themselves they said, "A successful visit!" And yet they knew no more of the

fifteen men than that they were dead, and probably Usherees had killed them. And they did not yet know the total disposition of the Roanoke towns and Osocon their chief. Croatan Island could not tell them that, except that if there were a wrong thing Usherees would somehow compass it! Cherokees were quite different.

Down at the creek, as the boat pushed away, Christopher saw again the young Indian. "Who is that, Manteo?"

Manteo looked. "It is Meshawa, grandson of Canacaught the Prophet. He can run and leap like the King of the Stags. When he sends an arrow that which he sends it against falls. Also when there is trouble he can tell what to do, because he has listened to Canacaught since he was little."

"He will come some time to our town?"

"Yes, yes," said Manteo serenely. "All Croatans will come to see wonders. They have not come before because of Roanokes. But now they will come."

Croatan dwindled, ahead showed the looming pines of their own island. Smoke rose from the forest of the mainland. "Osocon's town!" The city of Raleigh when they came to it was tranquilly building among great trees, with the blue water before it. The pinnace drew into the home creek where they meant when they could to make a wharf.

Stafford and Guest, the two Assistants, reported

to the Governor. The next day the latter, Ananias Dare and Gilbert Darling with a score fully armed sailed across the sound to Roanoke main and Osocon's town.

Two days, and White returned, on the whole with a relieved mind. Osocon and all the Roanokes had showed themselves friendly enough. There had been a feast and tobacco smoking. The fifteen men? This, said Osocon, had been the way of it. A large band of Mangoaks, coming in canoes to visit their friends of Dasamonguepeuc had stopped at Roanoke Island for rest and refreshment and to kill deer. They were suddenly attacked by the English—not fifteen, for several had died—but by all the English there. The English perhaps thought the Mangoaks had come to kill them, but that was not so. They were there to kill deer, and knew nothing of the pale men. But attacked, they attacked back. There were fifty Mangoaks. It was a mistake, both sides! Osocon's people could not have made it, but the Mangoaks were ignorant.—The removal of all Roanokes from the island? That was natural, thought Osocon. It was not large. The mainland had everything the island had and thousands more. The new settlers, the English, would need the whole island.—Why had no Roanokes appeared to welcome the English and to trade with them? It was the time of the first maize dance. Everybody had been much engaged. But now they were coming, some one day and some another

day, to see the wonders and smoke the peace pipe with the English.—Would they begin and continue to trade maize and other foods for English goods? That they would!

Two or three Roanoke men freely returned with the English. Osocon himself came in a few days, and made much talk of peace.

It was evident that the City of Raleigh needed more citizens. Citizens and supplies of every kind. The ships prepared to depart—or the *Lion* and the *Rosemary,* for the *Little Bess* should stay. Simon Fernando also was in haste. "I would get the *Lion* back to Hull, for I've got my notions!"

It was Christopher Guest who heard him say that. "What notions?"

Simon Fernando spat. "I've got my notions of preferment and wages."

"Better than Sir Walter Raleigh's?"

"He's a private man."

"He pays as well as any Company, and it's brilliant to say, 'I serve Sir Walter Raleigh!' "

"There's a more shining person—I say not whether man or woman—and a huge, great Company."

"If you mean," said Christopher, "the Queen and all England, why not say so? And what gives you to think that the *Lion,* which is a merchant ship, may with any speed be wanted and taken for a ship of war?"

"Oh, I don't know!" answered Simon Fernando. "Shipmasters hear strange talk in ports and some-

thing sticks in their head! But it may all be fancifulness!"

"In Spanish ports?"

"I've been there too," said Simon Fernando. "But whether I got the notion there or in an English port or a French one, or even an Italian one, I do not remember. It just stuck. But I don't suppose there's anything in it."

"Spanish names may draw Spanish news."

"My father was Spanish, not I! I'm good English. All the same, I want to get the *Lion* back to Hull."

Guest took this talk to the Governor, Ananias Dare being by. "Do you think, sir, there's any danger of stoppage of ships coming this way, even of not letting any set forth at all?"

White sat with his doubled hand beneath his mouth. "If I thought that, back I'd take you all, every man and every woman—"

"Give up!" exclaimed his son-in-law. "That would be too weak!"

The Governor moved sharply. "It is a preposterous fancy! In the nature of Master Simon Fernando is something contrary beyond words! He manages a ship, I'll allow, but he crosses you like a saw while he's doing it! What should he know that we knew not at starting? Know more, guess more, than Raleigh and Drake and Her Grace and the Council? We all know that war may come. But not this year, nor next, nor even next to that!"

Christopher Guest agreed. Crabbed, mocking men had crabbed, mocking fancies!

At dawn on the eighteenth of August was born Virginia Dare.

The next day there sailed the *Lion* and the *Rosemary*. The settlers stood upon the shore to watch the sails grow smaller, smaller, smaller. Now there was only wide, blue sea. How little looked the *Little Bess,* their one ship!

Six days later a gale befell such as they had never known. The *Little Bess* lost anchor, was driven forth and beaten to death against the bar. She filled and sank. Her seamen drowned with her.

There was no ship. There was no bridge, however frail. Naught but empty, aching, azure sea!

CHAPTER V

MESHAWA

THEY gathered the crops they had planted in July in the deserted Indian fields and traded further for maize with Osocon and the main. The hunters brought in venison, the fishers fish. In their storehouse stood yet in fair array English wheaten flour and ship biscuit, dried beans, wine, oil, salt, vinegar, honey and a little sugar. When they found a bee tree they added to the honey. As the autumn advanced, they began to dry venison after the Indian fashion. Now and again a bear was killed and they stored the oil. They did not suppose the wild fowl would leave them. Wind shook down nuts and the Council ordered these gathered into heaps. Winter was short in this part of the world, short and mild. They would not starve, any more than they would freeze with their goodly faggot piles, their rich pine logs for burning.

Many trees and bushes remained green, summer and winter. But others now were turned into crimson and gold. There fell over land and sea a halcyon calm. The red and yellow leaves began to fall, quietly, continually. Those yet upon the

trees turned to copper, but day by day they loosened and fell. A purple haze, that was more a light than a haze, began to form in the forest aisles and the cleared spaces. It was very still, and the air nor hot nor cold, but the sun moved with a lingering and a glamor.

In September a fever attacked them, and five died. In October the fever was gone. The sick crept forth into the sun. But in this month a woman was struck by a rattlesnake and died, and a man was drowned. In November was safety for all. "All" meant perhaps a hundred and fifteen men and two or three half-grown boys, fifteen women and Miles Darling and Virginia Dare.

Manteo dwelled in the City of Raleigh, though now and again he voyaged to Croatan. They had two boats, given by the *Lion* and the *Rosemary,* and fastened safe among the reeds the night of the hurricane that had sunk the *Little Bess.* Beside these were half-a-dozen canoes, bought from Osocon for a scarlet cloak and a pewter basin and ewer. This was their fleet, and they built a landing to serve it, all in a creek mouth overlooked by their fort.

Osocon professed friendliness. Perhaps twice a week appeared canoes rowed by Indians, heaped with corn and meat and peltry. These savages were Roanokes, but at times arrived canoes from Croatan or from Hatorask, Weapomeoc or Secotan. They were great marvel,—the English and their belongings and their ways! Great, and doubtless

to some, anxious marvel. The Council gave these parties friendly welcome, but formal too, preserving state for dear policy's sake.

November was a peaceful month. December ran chill to cold, with crackling fires of pine knots. At Yule they made merry. In January the Council reduced the weekly ration for each cabin. Hunters and fowlers had ceased to be always fortunate; the fish seemed wary of the weirs; the storehouse began to look gaunt. Fewer Indians came with food; trading parties sent over to mainland brought back no great lading. February brought further husbanding. But it could not be said that they feared starvation. More men must hunt or fish and must use longer hours; all waste must be cut off. So they had enough to do with, though all grew thinner. The coming autumn they must store more corn. And as soon as John White returned, there must be considered removing the City of Raleigh to the mainland. An island not large had too great disadvantages. It was February. April at latest should give them the ships again.

Christopher with Anthony Little went hunting. In open spaces the ground stretched brown and hard and sparkling with rime; in the deep wood it lay brown and soft, patched with moss and a small ever-living fern. Pine and cypress and bay and other trees that stood bare, water with a thin crust of ice, a sun that rising made it thinner. Christopher and Anthony did not mind the bright, still cold; liked it.

"It's naught to our winters—though Devon's naught again to Yorkshire! What do you think the Governor and Sir Walter are doing to-day? Thinking of us, I'll be bound! I dreamed last night, Master Christopher, of Old Hall, and then —and that's funny—I dreamed of a great stream of ships. But they weren't coming our way."

"Not a great stream."

"I waked," said Anthony, "saying 'Never, never!' and I do think that was strange! But I wasn't sad, for I seemed just to have been talking with my mother and father—rest their souls!—and with my old grandsire that I can just remember. And then I went to sleep again and dreamed that it was May Day and we were dancing in Old Meadow and Margery was catching at the ribbons with a garland round her head."

"Dreams!" said Christopher. "I do not know what they are. They are a part of life."

He fitted an arrow to his bow and shot a hare. A little later they had another, and then Anthony killed a doe. They were now several miles from the City of Raleigh. Having moved due west they were still close upon the southern rim of their island, and now, leaving the doe lying, they struck down to the water. Before turning homeward they might find two or three birds.

Presently, parting drooping branches, they stood upon a half-moon of white sand at the head of a narrow inlet of salt water. To either hand spread brown marsh, while in front shone Pantico or

Pamlico, very still to-day and wintry blue. Beyond Pamlico were the long sandbars; yonder the break through which had passed their ships. Long sandbars, and beyond these the surf of Atlantic. Christopher and Anthony gazed. When would they behold a sail?

No sail upon the ocean and none upon Pamlico. But coming around a point of their island appeared a canoe with a solitary rower,—an Indian. There was no distance, he saw the two hunters upon the strip of silver and his paddle hung suspended. Christopher raised his voice. "Take us with you to our city!"

The rower turned toward them, shot his canoe into the reeds and stepped upon the sand. "I know you. You are Christopher. I come to see you."

"You are Meshawa."

The other nodded. "I want to talk with you. This place better than your town. Send him away."

Spoke Christopher, "You can drag the doe here?"

"Aye!" said Anthony and went off to do it.

Guest had been one of the diligent with Manteo. By now he had sufficient Cherokee. Moreover, so strikingly right were Indian sign, gesture and look, that every reinforcement was brought to the spoken word. Often enough the word itself could be spared. The two sat down in the warming sun, upon the sand.

"What is it?"

"Meshawa has been within hearing of Roanokes."

"Yes?"

"The Roanokes are making a noise. They are rattling like the rattlesnake."

"Against us?"

"Yes. They ask themselves, 'Shall we strike?' They do not yet know. It is yet talk-talk. But they know that if they strike they should do it before your ships come. Warning—that is what their thinking men think of. Warning that this land is not for pale-skins. Not any of it! Roanoke or anywhere else. So you may get tired and stop coming. We all think, think, of this coming of yours.—I think if you go make more friends with Osocon, that will be good. I think if you knock some of your men in the head so that they cannot hurt Indian head and heart, that will be very good!"

"You mean?"

"Everything goes everywhere. One of your chiefs pushed a canoe away and gave bad words —gave them as though it thundered. A man you call Spendlove comes to Indian boy out fishing and takes the fish in his boat. He gives nothing in turn. Another man—you call him Will Gosling—struck an Indian, a Moratuck. Now that one has gone, hot-hearted, to the Moratucks."

"I know," answered Christopher. "In the mass, I think, we have been cautious, not unwise.

But there are always those who imperil!—How many bows can Osocon muster?"

"How many war men? If he draws in Hatorask, Mangoak, Moratuck, Chawanook—" He made a statement that Guest translated into "Two thousand."

"They always come secretly?"

"That is Indian way."

"Manteo?"

"Manteo is Croatan—is Cherokee—like Meshawa. Osocon tell him—*nothing*. Tell *me* nothing, either. I went into Roanoke country because Canacaught said, 'They are making up against us.' I came to where so many were hunting. I lay in a hollow log half in stream, below their fire. They sat around and talked. A brother of Osocon was there, and he boasted. I heard all they said. The stars were shining. When they were asleep I crept from the log and stepped into the stream and went away."

"They will war against Croatan?"

"Perhaps now, perhaps later. I will tell you, for you will not tell it again until I say 'Tell!' Canacaught has been told by the Great Father that the Croatans must leave their island and the salt-water country and go to the mountains, into all-Cherokee country."

"When?"

"When he can bring Croatans to see with his eyes. Canacaught's eyes are old, old, very wise ones. It is a secret, English man!"

"I will remember," said Christopher. "But the other talk, that must come to the Council!"

"Send—go yourself—and make friends over again with Osocon," said Meshawa. "Tell him about rich things coming on the ships—things for him. Make your men see if they do not walk rightly, they ruin your tribe. If they fling hard or mocking words and wrong Indians they will have the arrow and the tomahawk. You say that you believe in the Great Father. Ask him for your ships to come back soon! I have told," said Meshawa, "all I know."

The Englishman stretched out his arm and laid his hand upon the hand of the Indian. "We are friends, Meshawa. Your friend thanks you!"

Meshawa said gravely, "I like you, Christopher," and stood up from the sand; Anthony appeared with the doe. They placed it in the canoe where was already dried meat and a great measure of corn, gift of Meshawa. The three men took their places. There was another oar; Christopher took this, and a lesson in rowing, Indian fashion. So they came together to the City of Raleigh.

But Meshawa would not stay, nor even leave the canoe. "I talk to you. I come for that. It is done. Now good-by, Christopher!"

Canoe unladed, he pushed from wharf steps and turned his craft, so narrow, so light, toward Croatan.

"Good-by—good-by!" cried Guest. "Thank you, Meshawa!"

The canoe in the frosty sunlight turned a point of shore and vanished. Anthony called James Barnaby, who was fishing, to help with the doe and the dried meat and the corn. As for Christopher, he walked thoughtfully into the town and to the house of Ananias Dare.

CHAPTER VI

STRAWBERRIES

STRAWBERRY time! It was strawberry time. Susan and Miles gathered them in a pannikin. They were red over the ground beyond the belt of pines. The boy stained his hands and his clothes and his lips. He brought handfuls to Susan who carried the pail. "For Virginia—for Virginia!"

"She can't eat them," said Susan. "She's too little!" But he brought them on, "For Virginia —for Virginia!"

"Maybe she'll look at them," granted Susan.

Audrey Tappan was with her. The two women finally rested in the shade of a great, joyously fresh and green tree. "It's mortal hot! Miles, Miles, come into the shade!" But Miles sat in the sun, in rapt contemplation of a small black tortoise.

Audrey ate strawberries from the stalks in her hand. She was twenty-three, and so might counsel nineteen-year Susan. "As for Martin Spendlove, I wouldn't have him! He'd spend a woman's heart—that he would—spend it quick! Before you could turn around there'd be nothing left but ashes! He says to me—but I says, says I, 'Be-

gone, Martin Spendlove! begone to your Indian wench!' Tom Darnel now—"

"He's had a life like a robin in a snowstorm. But there's some good in him—"

"If you look far enough—I'm not denying it! He isn't just a voice and a big hand—and foot—like Will Gosling!"

"Well, there are other bachelors!" said Susan, the strawberry stain having somehow got into her cheeks.

"Now you're thinking of Silvester Primrose! Aye, he's a pretty fellow and a good fellow!"

"Here's Winifred Rose."

Winifred Rose came to them with her pail two-thirds filled. "They are big ones. But it takes a long time to fill anything with wild strawberries."

"How are you going to use them? So, or in a pie?—Are the men still planting?"

"Yes, they're in the big field. Manteo is showing them Indian fashion."

"They say this maize will ripen in July. They'll plant another big field in June and that'll ripen in August. And another in July and that'll ripen in September. And beans and melons and such. Master Guest says we aren't going to starve!"

"Wheat's coming on, too," said Audrey. "Lord, Lord! 'Twill be a pleasant sight to the ships when they come! Right away to see an English wheatfield waving!"

Winifred nursed her knee. "It's time and high time they were coming!—I can't but think o' storms and grinning, monstrous, Spanish ships!"

"If there's a way to think chill and gray, and 'The Lord's Love's Removed', you'll find it!" Audrey spoke with vigor.

Susan asked, "Were you born so, Winifred?"

"I was born with a caul," said Winifred.

"That's not unlucky—it's lucky! But you certainly don't encourage General Luck.—The ships are coming all right."

"Well, anyway, yestereve I heard Mistress Dare say to Mistress Darling that her eyes were aching with looking."

"What did Dame Cis say?"

"Said she'd made a law for herself. She might look five times a day, but no more. Watched pot never boiled.—But when she looks, she looks keen!" ended Winifred.

"They're coming all right," said Susan. "Master Dare and Master Guest and Doctor Wren know.—It'll be a rare holiday!"

Matthew Fullwood stepped from the belt of trees, upon his back an enormous bundle of dead branches and cones bound together with withes. "Ha, maids, picking strawberries!" Miles left the tortoise and ran to him. "Up! Let me ride!"

"Presently, presently! All in good time!" He slipped his burden to the ground, and sat down. "The sea wind feels good!" Susan gave him a

cluster of berries and he ate, quenching his thirst. "I'm not the best at agriculture, and I was never much of a hunter, so when no building's going on, I fell trees and bring in faggots for Mother Goode's fire."

Winifred asked, still nursing her knees, "How many times a day, Master Fullwood, do you look out to sea for the ships?"

"If you will know, Winifred, at Sunrise, High Noon and Sunset. I will not look oftener than that, for it would be not to trust the Lord!"

"Master Fullwood, if the ships didn't come—didn't come at all—didn't ever come?"

Fullwood finished his berries. "Still the Lord would live, and because He lives, we also!"

"Winifred is ever as mournful," said Audrey Tappan, "as the whippoorwill! Why, I want to know, make question of the ships coming? They're out there, on the sea, this blazing noon!"

"Aye, you're right!" said Fullwood. "This overdue needn't amount to much. If you've watched ships, you learn to know that their rule of life is, 'A little longer than expected.' They wait on the wind, and that's a loiterer and a lingerer, or a turner out of the course. And there are other incidents and accidents. It's a long road that ships travel, long and lone, and you can't count the possibilities of delay. But Delay has two syllables, and Disaster has three. Pick your berries, lasses, and rest in the hand of the Lord!"

"How did you learn so much, Master Fullwood —great words and all—being a mason, which is to work just with stone and lime?"

"Stone and lime are pretty thick books," answered Fullwood. "But I was taught to read early. Then I said, 'I must serve some one who has books and will lend them.' So I built a cellar and a chimney for Master Coffin, our Parson, and then I asked him for a book, if so be I would never dirty it. He was gentle—no hedge parson —and he had a room full of books. So I carried away what I wanted, and brought it back, and took another, and then another, and so through the years. You think, if you're a craftsman, mason or smith, that you can't make time to find the Lord's Mind where it's laid in books. But you can!"

"It's a great thing to be wise!" said Susan. "I've often thought— There's the dinner horn, Audrey! My pail's filled. If you like, Winifred, I'll put the top ones in yours."

Fullwood lifted his great form, resumed the faggots, and perched Miles upon his shoulder. The child cried with glee, "Now I'm taller than any! Yon's fort—yon's sea!"

"Only sea, no ships," said Winifred.

She had a sweet, melancholy, and thrilling voice. Miles followed her. "Only sea—only sea —only sea!"

The nearest cabin was Mother Goode's, who kept house for her son John, for Fullwood her

cousin, and half-a-dozen Plymouth men and old neighbors. Mother Goode was spinning in the shade without the door. As they approached they heard the wheel, they smelled the dinner.

Mother Goode ceased to spin. "Why, you've got a fine load, Matthew! And will you look at the strawberries!" Fullwood swung Miles to the ground and went to deposit the faggots in the lean-to. "Mother Goode," asked Audrey, "how many times a day do you look to sea for the *Rosemary* and the *Lion*?"

"I look when I think on't. But I haven't much time to think on't! Do your work and say your psalm and have always a bite and sup for Happiness! So you'll be well off if the ships come, and not so bad off if they do not come!"

Winifred cried in her thrilling minor, "Then you think that something may have happened?"

"Psha! I said no such word!" Mother Goode spoke with vigor. "You're a wailful soul, Winifred! Why shouldn't the ships come?—Now here are John and the others, and I've got to put on dinner."

Audrey and Winifred and Susan with Miles went on, bearing strawberries, to the row of cabins under the fort and the pine wood.

That eve a great moon rose as the sun set. Arnold and Joyce Archard's twelve-year-old, Andrew, lay in a fever. Peregrine Wren tended the boy, and Dame Cis had been watching an aft-

ernoon through while Joyce slept. Now they stepped from door together and turned toward the cabins of the President and Assistants. So, they faced the sound and the sea and that wide break through which must enter the ships, and the great moon. Behind them hung the west, all coral. Dame Cis looked. "I did not look at sunset!—It's a month since we began an aching looking!"

"The winter's over," said Wren. "The corn's growing. Osocon is friendly. Any fine day now we shall see the ships! It's a bad habit, this perpetual saying, 'Are they in sight? I'll just step again to the door—' "

"Yes, I see that, and I've commanded myself not to do it."

The physician looked at her with friendly admiration. "You're the strongest woman here—though Madam Dare is strong, too, in her ivory way, and Mother Goode is strong."

"Oh, she is—they are! You men do pretty well too!"

He laughed. "Well, we mean to!"

She said, "It interests me, how we've all grown fond of one another, here so strangely together, on this island, so far from home. We feel kin, don't we, and all England? I'm fond—reasonably—of Master Donne and Master Merryweather. I'm fond—in a way—of Will Gosling and Tom Darnel!"

They laughed again, walking between the great

pearl moon and the rosy west. Dame Cis said suddenly, "But tell me, will you, just what would we do if the ships—if the ships, going or coming —were *sunken*?"

Wren took a moment, then answered, "Do? Why, do well enough—if so be we can keep the Indians friendly! Do well enough until Sir Walter, hearing nothing, seeing no returning sail, should send others. Given Walter Raleigh, that would not be years!"

She gave a light sigh; she lifted her frank, rather beautiful face to the sky above the moon. "Well, the Lord send us good living and dying! I will keep cheerful!"

"Aye, do, Dame Cis!" said her companion. "I will tell you two great medicines in the world— High Heart and Good Cheer!"

They came to a cabin. "Here's home.—Listen! Susan is singing Miles asleep."

Littling, Littling,
  Go to sleep!
All thy angels
  Ward will keep.
Littling, Littling . . .
Littling, Littling,
  Slumber deep!
All thy angels
  Ward will keep!

The cabin of Ananias Dare stood next. "Eleanor, too, is singing.—Now Susan hushes."

A contralto, deep and pure, floated to them.

Lullaby, lullaby!
My pretty babe, my dearest All.
Lullaby, lullaby!
Round thee stands an angel band.
Lullaby!
Christ will take thee in His hand.

CHAPTER VII

THE SHIPS DO NOT COME

TOM DARNEL, Will Gosling, Robert Brace and Ned Barecombe hunted at the top of the island, having come thither in a canoe. The canoe rested for them among reeds; they themselves ranged a deep, green wood. It was mid-June. They had had no especial luck. Then suddenly, not far from the water, in a grassy space set around with very great trees, they came upon an Indian hunting party of three, engaged in cutting up a fat buck.

The buck was what they wanted—they were four Englishmen to three Roanokes—Will Gosling was in a quarrelsome mood. Yet at first there appeared some kind of amicableness. "Trade? Here, I've got two or three beads! Tom, haven't you some too?"

Tom produced three big green glass ones. But to all persuasion the Indians laughed shortly, shook their heads and proceeded with their work. Gosling watched them with indignation.

"I want to tell you that you are out of bounds! The President and Council and Osocon have agreed that this island is English and that you are

not to hunt here! You're no better than French or Spanish!"

"Which means," said Brace, "that the buck is forfeit!"

"That's the word, Robert! Thank you for it! 'Forfeit.' D'ye know what that means, Redskins?"

If they did not know the word, it was otherwise as to tone and gesture. No race, anywhere, could be quicker at conceiving and translating "insult." Spanish nor French, nor any. The tallest Indian rose and stood by the spreading antlers. "Island ours first. Hunt where we please. No like it, go back where you came from!"

"'Forfeit' means," said Will Gosling, "that we'll take the meat, and you shall have the beads. Ned, there, has got a red neckerchief that we'll throw in.—Trade, trade!"

"No!" said the Indian. "You go to your town. We go to Osocon."

Tom Darnel turned reasonable. "Leave it at that, Will! Remember, we aren't to quarrel, not at any cost, says the Council!"

"'Not at hardly any cost'—those were the words! 'Hardly' lets us out. Put the beads and the neckerchief down on that moss.—Now the buck is ours, chimney sweeps, and we'll protect our own!"

Tom Darnel objected. "We're four to their three, and better armed; besides, as you say, being Englishmen." He appealed to Barecombe.

"D'ye think it's fair, Ned? Besides, some one or more of us'll get hurt!"

"Will's a powerful man in his tempers!" answered Barecombe. "When he sets his big brain there's no doing much with him!—Come, Will, let's let them alone, seeing they don't know their profit!"

"Rush them!" said Gosling. "You, Robert, you're the next most courageous Englishman—now!"

One of the Indians was but a lad. The tall Indian broke into a kind of chant, expressive enough of hate and fury. He had a knife, the blade a long sharpened flint, and a short, heavy hatchet or tomahawk. As Gosling and Brace stepped toward him, he suddenly met them more than halfway, lifted and swung his hatchet and brought it down upon Brace's skull. The next instant, he had grappled with Gosling and was endeavoring to use his knife. The white man was large and strong. He wrested the knife from the brown hand, and in a passion, seeing Brace that was his crony upon the earth, he turned the handle and drove the blade into the Indian's heart. The head went back, the grasp relaxed, he slid to the ground. The dead hunter lay beside the stag contended for.

The two Indians, seeing their case to be hopeless, turned and raced through the trees. "They've got a canoe," said Tom Darnel monotonously. "Now they'll go tell Osocon tales about us! I don't think the Council will like it."

Barecombe said, "We ought to have thought about that half an hour ago."

Gosling vaunted, "You've got to show them! But alack! Look now at poor Robert!"

"He's not dead! He's stirring."

Brace sat up with his hand to his head. "I'm all right.—Are we back in England?"

"Let's make a pact, I say," said Barecombe. "What's the use of saying anything about this? Let's drop him in the water, and just say that Will Gosling shot the deer."

Tom Darnel shook his head. "No, I don't hold with that, and I don't because I can see that the Council ought to know. We oughtn't to have done it, with the ships not here, and that's flat!"

"Why, I'll tell," said Gosling. "Why shouldn't I? He struck first. Will ye look at the lump on Robert's forehead? Of course, when we started discussing, I didn't mean to *kill* any of them!"

In the end they went home and told, though with alterations and embellishments.

Dare and Guest and three or four others crossed in the pinnace to Roanoke main and Osocon's town. There they heard the Indian version, and there they mended or hoped they mended the broken lines of amity.

But "Smooth, too smooth—too quickly reconciled!" said Dare to Christopher Guest. They were in the pinnace, making a crooked way over glassy water and between shoals to the City of Raleigh.

"Aye!" answered Guest.

It was hot, the air quivering above the flats. The intense blue sky domed them like a bowl, like a trap set fast down upon low earth and sea. No lifting its rim, no pushing out, maybe to freedom! "John White and the ships, why do they not come?"

July, and they did not come; August, and they did not come. The birthday of Virginia Dare, and they were not here. "Wilt thou ever see thy grandfather or an English ship?"

Why were they left so on the other side of the world? The mind gasped for truth. Had the *Lion* and the *Rosemary* never reached England, meeting tempest or Spain? In that case, surely, surely, Sir Walter would not wait thus forever, but would have sent ship of finding, ship of succor, ship of question into fate! Or had White and the ships, two, three or four, duly left Plymouth for Virginia and somewhere in that vast stretch between met tempest or Spain? Bad, indeed, would this be, for so Sir Walter would wait and wait, months yet to come, before sending. Or was there strange delay, but the ships would yet lift out of the blue?

The mind swung between the chances. But arose one day a thought. What if there be deeper reason yet? What if there is a war, and no ships to give him and he could not sail,—not now nor no man knows when?

It was Christopher Guest who entertained that,

and it came to him with a memory of Simon Fernando. Talk upon the *Lion*—talk of Spain and Spain's plans! "What," thought Guest, "if there is suddenly launched a war, and they send a great fleet, and our Queen must meet it with every ship? What if John White never sailed, and cannot sail? What if long war and all the woe and chance of war has sunk a great gulf between us and Home? Seven-score of us—a sparrow's fate when all the skies clang with eagles!"

CHAPTER VIII

ATTACK

IT was hot. Steamy air and clouds of insects hung above the marshes. Sickness befell; seven died. The graveyard that they made beside the church had now mounds not a few. Dejection entered the City of Raleigh. Hope deferred, sense of danger roundabout, homesickness, physical ills,—the shadows thickened and converged. Some endured staunchly, learning and growing in the midst of adversity. Many in varying degrees helped themselves and others. A few, ignorant, made weakness weaker. The days passed, but no white point lifted from the blue.

In September the sickness held its hand. Toward the latter part of the month arrived a cool, bright dryness, welcome and tarrying visitor! Hope sprang up. "Maybe we are through the worst! There are yet two months before winter, and we have now our own corn and shall not starve. A ship, too, an English ship, may come!"

Upon a bright Sunday they thought this, and prayed and sang in their church with fervor. Coming forth after benediction they greeted one another with sober cheer. They looked seaward;

—no sail. But the day was cool and bright, and for five days there had been no new sick, and those who lay abed were doing well. Men and women, the cluster of England-in-Virginia was not so large as it had been. Moreover, the units had grown somewhat thin and wan with heat and toil and serving and inner care. "Strength come to us," they prayed, "who are here in loneliness and trouble!"

The day was sunny, dry, singing of autumn, and they had Sunday rest from work.

Matthew Fullwood with certain others strayed by the blue water. "Aye! Plymouth Bells. Shut your senses to the wind in the pines and yon clacking birds, and you can hear them!"

"No, I can't, Matthew!"

"You haven't trained yourself. All the bells of England."

"But can't you hear, then, the seamen on the *Lion?* Can't you hear John White and Sir Walter telling us what may be the matter?"

"I can't go so far as that," said Fullwood. "The lines get too fine and thin. But England is still ringing and ships are still sailing, and God is still reigning."

"I reckon so," said Sylvester Primrose. "But it do sometimes look as though we were on a raft that's being drawn underneath the world!"

Another said, "Where we won't hear any news, nor give none—"

"Then I say," answered Fullwood, "that you've

still got the Kingdom Within, and that there is wide company and great news!"

Women also walked upon the shore for recreation. When Susan appeared, Sylvester Primrose detached himself from Fullwood's group. Miles walked to-day with his father and mother. The youth and the maid had a silvery hour on a bit of silver beach.

At last it came to, "Susan, why don't we marry?"

"I don't want to! I've got to look after Miles."

"That's just your roguery! You could take care of him still, till you had one of your own, and even then, if Madam Darling likes it and we aren't yet rich.—Susan, your blue eyes are so beautiful, and your cheeks and lips are like roses! You haven't grown wan like some of the women. And when you laugh you carry me right where there isn't any trouble and never was!"

"Where is that country? Oh, if you could take me and all of us there, Sylvester!"

"Marry me, and I'll take you," said Sylvester sturdily.

"I'll have to think of it. I'll think until the ships come."

They stood by the water and looked over the blue field to the bar and the ocean. "Well, if I love you and you love me," said Sylvester, "love will pull us through!"

The bright day passed. The sun went down behind the dark forest that was the mainland.

White had established, and the President and

Council continued, a rule as to the fort. It had its garrison. Eight men served a week, when another eight took their place, turn and turn about. An Assistant captained the eight. A stockade enclosed half an acre of earth. Within it rose a keep, built of stout logs. By this, upon a natural mound overlooking the palisade, were ranged the two culverins. The keep had some store of food and of harquebuses, swords, pikes, powder and shot. Within the stockade bubbled a small spring. By day there was one sentinel, and by night two.

This night Martin Spendlove and Edward Barecombe were sentinels and Christopher Guest the Commandant. The night breathed cool and healthful; men who meant sleep slept soundly.

Guest, before he went to his bed, made the round. He found the two men alert. "All right, sir! Nothing to challenge except a bat, and some small, four-legged thing."

"Ten of the clock, and all's well!" said Christopher, and passing on, mounted to the greatest culverin. Now he overlooked the stockade. The night hung very dark; darkness hid the cabins of the City of Raleigh, close though they were to the fort. They and the standing trees were shadow together. All lay still, all was profoundly quiet; only an indistinguishable low murmur of water and pine trees. Above streamed the stars, slowly, slowly, multitudinous and glittering. He had a thought of Old Hall, of Marian Leigh, of Will Guest in London, of Walter Raleigh and of the

Queen. From these his fancy went to the book he was reading, taking the moments that Providence gave. John White, a reading man, had brought in the *Lion* a chest of books. Now they rested in his daughter's care, whose only care was that all help and cheer should be open to all. Guest was reading the "Canterbury Tales", and now his mind returned upon the Franklin's Story. "The magician who took away the threatening rocks and smoothed the way and forgave his hire. God knows it were good to be such an one!"

He strained eyes into the darkness. "The ships —where are they? The future—what is our future? The children down there, the babe Virginia, Dame Cis—what is theirs—what is mine—what is ours? But that depends," thought Guest, "on how far our life stretches! If it be taken up into the very Life of Life, then the sea grows shining."

Thought and feeling halted, then returned upon the dark night and some piece of work for tomorrow. He left the culverin and descending to his hut went, half-dressed, to bed and to sleep.

He was dreaming. He thought that he was walking the sea—many people, he among them, were walking the sea. A vast wave towered up. It fell with a crash.—There was a cavern filled with blue light, under the sea, and those who had walked about above were now moving there. He heard a voice that said, "If you think through death then, certes, there is no death!" The blue

cavern was shaken and he saw some kind of smiling shore.

He waked all over, at once, in his ears the loud cry of Martin Spendlove and the discharge of the harquebus. He leaped from bed, seized his sword and ran outside, calling as he did so to the men in the second room. Beside the stockade gate he found Martin Spendlove. "It's over there, in the belt of wood! I heard something, and I thought I saw, but I don't know—"

Guest passed without. The harquebus had roused one or more of the cabins. He saw a light in Ananias Dare's house, then in another, and he seemed to hear voices. It was but a second. Save for that agitation, there was calm, deep, silent, starry night; there was the City of Raleigh as it had been, there was Virginia, England, the world as they had been. With a stroke of hands together, all changed. There began the gross and terrible happening, or it did not now begin, but wheeled now into the stage of climax and catastrophe.

How near hung the forest! It was impossible really to push it back, to cut down aught but the more immediate trees. Now out of it—or rather from before it, from among tree stumps, from the mere ribbon of clearing behind the City of Raleigh —burst a yelling, a horrible wild whooping, fierce, loud, long and renewed, curdling the blood. It came with a sense of God knew how many throats, how many strung bodies behind the voice. A great many; it was a horrid tide, the sound! With

it burst out red light, some great heap of pine brush fired. There hung beside the gate a bell, brought from England with the small multitude of things brought. "Ring it—ring!" Rung so, it meant, "To the fort—all in the City of Raleigh—all, all, no tarrying!"

The garrison was about him. "You four—the cannon! Serve quickly and serve well! The rest of you to your places! Steadfast does it—steadfast!"

He himself stood in the stockade gate. After the burst of yelling had come silence. The great fire burned and drew the eye that way, but showed nothing. He thought, "It is meant to draw the eye that way!" and he shouted to the men above, "Send a ball into the blackness beyond the three pines!"

The culverin answered, shock and flame and roar. The ball fell in the darkness, burst, and there ensued a faint, confused crying.

It procured pause, momentary time. The first of the cabin folk appeared upon the path immediately before the gate, hurrying forms in the darkness, startled voices. They passed him into the stockade.

"Is Master Dare there?"

"No, sir. He tarries to see every one forth."

Others reached the refuge, and still others. Some were fully, others hardly half-dressed. Some bore with them hurriedly caught-up treasures of clothing or household articles. The men

had harquebus, sword or pike. There was now a light in the stockade, for it, too, had its heap of brush for firing. The second culverin flamed and roared. The stream increased from the cabins. Mother Goode and Susan and Matthew Fullwood passed Guest, Fullwood carrying Miles Darling. Behind them came Audrey Tappan and Winifred Rose. He saw Tom Darnel and Will Gosling, then Ambrose Viccars, one of the Assistants, with his wife Elizabeth, and Joyce Archard with her boy. Others pressed by. There might be fifty now within the stockade. Peregrine Wren entered the light. He was carrying the babe Virginia. "The others are close behind—"

As he spoke to Christopher, from a quarter of darkness not looked for, there broke the enemy. A flight of arrows, a yell, a rush, under the range of the culverins, down into the City of Raleigh, a wave that splashed between the cabins and turned the way to fort into a dolorous street. The night split into shrieks and shouts and that terrible war yell.

"Oh, my God!" cried Guest. With a dozen behind him he sprang forth and down the path. Cut them out—bring them in!

But it was not to be done. Osocon had beyond five hundred braves. For three nights they had been gathering—canoes through the darkness—to the great place of canes at the end of Roanoke Island. They had lain there, perdu, until they were an army, Roanokes and Mangoaks, and Mora-

tucks and others. They had come swiftly, by so many paths, this night to the white man's town. Some unwariness, something traveling through the air—they knew the way such things did—had warned the sentry. So the surprise was not as complete as had been planned. But in the end it would be the same thing, Osocon and his braves were assured of that! Usheree loss would be heavier than it might have been if the air had not turned traitor. Because of all that, attack the more furiously, and cease to try to take prisoners!

It was a hive, a swarm, a horde,—dark and furious. It overran the way, it covered and bore down those who had not reached refuge. It was so many that it could divide, menace and threaten to envelop the band from the stockade.—The very nearest from the cabins were reached and incorporated. The rest were strained toward, but not reached. A cabin was afire. In the breadths of blackness they felt and heard, in the breadths of red saw as well. They from the fort saw Ananias and Eleanor Dare cut down, saw Master Cooper, the minister, slain, saw Gilbert Darling—Christopher Guest, bleeding, his sword red, took Dame Cis from her knees, lifted her across the bodies of two Indians and from Gilbert, lying dead. "Come, come! You've got Miles—"

The light showed Osocon himself. Osocon himself killed Manteo. "Croatan, Croatan! You are but the first of you Cherokees here in Usheree land!"

"Back, back, all to the fort!"

"Back!"

Eighteen or twenty, the sallying party included, got within gate. Close—close and bar! Each man with his piece to the loopholes!

Across the east ran a streak of dawn. The City of Raleigh, save only its fort, was burning. Fifty men, eight women, two children were behind the stockade. The rest, men and women, of Raleigh's Venture were slain. Anthony Little would never bring his wife Margery and his children to Virginia. Young Sylvester Primrose had gone on the raft under the world.

CHAPTER IX

THEY GO TO CROATAN

NIGHT and a day and night again, and still they held the keep and the stockade, and still Osocon raved without and around. Twice there came massed attack that would somehow, anyhow, break through, climb over! Twice it was repelled. Arrows fell within the stockade. Danger was everywhere. Two men were killed, others hurt. Martin Spendlove, grappling with an Indian at top of stockade, received a knife thrust from which he died.

How much food? Three days' food at most. How much powder, ball and shot; how much longer might the culverins and the harquebuses appall? A little longer; not a great while longer. There was no hope, other than holding out until Osocon was tired. They had learned that Indian raids usually were as short as they were fierce. Hold out—hold out! Osocon might draw off, vanish, take his boats and depart, having slain half the English and burned their town.

Vanish! Vanish to return some dark night and complete the victory! Never would come the ships—never, never! All would die on Roanoke

Island. Some hardly cared, mourning for their dead.

Night, day, night. Within the stockade moved a haggard band, toilers without sleep, without food. Not long delayed—it could not be long delayed.

All bore themselves bravely. Even Winifred Rose, even Tom Darnel. But for their leader they looked to Christopher Guest. "Christopher Host as well!" That was Peregrine Wren's word, delivered with a grin of appreciation. A quality that was Guest's, of reasonable, friendly command, of care for self only in the Whole and to the Whole's safety and glory, rose in strength and suffused even the physical part of him. What he said was drunken like wine. He turned and handled the defense as it were his own body. His most powerful helpers were Matthew Fullwood, Peregrine Wren, Dame Cis and Mother Goode.

Dame Cis had her own grief; her husband whom she loved with honesty dead, his body unburied there or consumed with the burning houses, her child fatherless. Eleanor Dare, too, had been to her as a loved sister. But Dame Cis also lived for the Whole. Many stayed themselves by her and by Mother Goode,—Susan, who found that she had loved Sylvester Primrose, the other women, and men as well.

The babe Virginia wailed for her mother. They softened bread into pap and fed her, but it

was wailing, wailing. "Ah, child, child, thou'lt die soon enough!"

Miles watched. "What makes her cry so? Let's take her and go home, Mother!"

"We'll go before long, my dearest!—There, there now, she'll sleep. And thou, too, lie thee down and go to sleep!"

The third dawn broke in a wild storm of wind and rain. It ceased, and against the southwest was drawn a morning rainbow.

"Look, look. Maybe, 'tis a sign!"

The bow sprang vivid. It looked to their aching eyes unearthly bright. Before it faded one cried from the place of the culverins. "Come up here, sir! The Lord hath halved their force!"

Guest, Matthew Fullwood beside him, gazed over the stockade. There seemed, indeed, fewer by many. "They may only be gone into the forest. A trap maybe! If not that," said Christopher with a sober hope, "Osocon may begin to draw from the island. They would never have halved if they thought to take us to-day or to-morrow!"

"Something strange happens, and connected with that bow!" Fullwood's deep eyes glowed. "O Lord, if Thou openest the door Thou wilt open it widely!"

The day climbed toward noon. Though the besiegers were fewer, yet were they enough. And the food was gone, and the English almost spent.

Slowly, slowly, the sun burned down the west. The night was here.

In the night came the further happening. In the hour before dawn burst an outcry, prolonged and frightful. "What is it? Is it the end?"

"Not against us! It is battle out there!"

"Are they fighting among themselves?—Has an enemy stolen upon them as they stole upon us?"

Suddenly came the dawn and showed certain things to their straining eyes. "Croatans! They are Croatans!" The battle swayed to the foot of the stockade, and out of the yelling came distinguishable meanings. "Cherokee—you go back—you go down into the sea and your mountains pile upon you!"—"Usheree! Usheree! You are not worth while! You are women, women, women!"

A painted Croatan, young, tall and strong, other Croatans protecting him, ran full to stockade gate. He struck upon it with his hatchet; he shouted, "Christopher! Christopher!"

"Meshawa!"

Behind rang a cry of Croatan victory. Roanokes turned, Roanokes fled, they who were not slain. Croatans pursued, Croatans and Secotans who, though Usheree, had quarreled violently with Osocon and given a hundred warriors to Croatan. The Roanokes ran like deer through the forest for their canoes, and after them ran in leaps, and many more than they, those who had come in the night, in their own canoes. But Meshawa stopped with Christopher by the stockade gate.

"Where is that half of the Roanokes that drew away?"

The Indian gave a short laugh. "Canacaught is the wisest man! He sent to Osocon's town three birds, one after the other, and they sang and sang that half the great Cherokee nation was moving downward from the mountains to the sea. Melletaws, Sauras, Cheraws and Chicoras, moving down by the Cherokee path, moving fast, moving upon Usheree towns, upon Osocon's town. The singing birds scared the Roanoke towns.—The old men sent a canoe to Osocon. Danger at home—Cherokee danger! Osocon and half his braves have taken canoes and gone back to their town. They watch the Cherokee road, for still another bird came and sang, 'They are on the way; they are truly, truly coming!'"

"These Roanokes escaping—"

The Croatan made another expressive sound. "Not many will escape. Coming, we sunk their canoes, or drew them along with ours. We will need them, Christopher, for now you must come with us. Osocon will be very angry. He will come back."

"To Croatan Island?"

"First Croatan Island. But right away to the great land, and the Cherokee path. Croatan is going to leave the sea. Croatan is going back to the mountains."

"The mountains! They are far away!"

"Yes. Far, far away. Canacaught remembers.

Canacaught will lead us. Here we die, for now all the Usherees are raised against us."

"And we?"

"You die unless you come with us."

"Or unless the ships come at once."

"They will not come. Canacaught says tell you that. He saw the Great Water in a vision, all the Great Water, and the ships that you count on were not upon it."

Two hours passed. The Croatans returned from the pursuit, and the scalps of their enemies hung at their belts. Many among the English felt the heart contract at that. They had been burying their dead, the English, and seeking in the charred cabins of the City of Raleigh.

It was Christopher Guest, now their leader, who summoned all within the stockade again, there to hear Meshawa, who with six Croatans, stood in the rich sunlight, facing the tall, fair, gray-eyed Englishman. "Now speak to us, Meshawa!" Meshawa spoke. Indian words were ever to the point, and the gestures strongly reinforced. The English understood.

Peace between Cherokee and Usheree—Iroquois and Algonquin—in these low lands was at an end. It was at an end before this battle. Osocon only waited until the English were dead to kill Croatan. Canacaught and all Croatans knew that. Algonquin would have only Algonquin by the sea. Croatans were too few. They had won to-day.

But Roanokes could gather other Usherees. He held up both hands, spreading the fingers. So many towns! Croatan could not gather other Cherokees. Others too far. Secotans were friendly now, but they might make up their quarrel with Osocon.

Osocon was a strong man, a cunning man. But Canacaught was a wise man. Where the sun went to sleep were many Cherokees. Canacaught had spoken. "Danger is around us, like winter all the year! Let us leave the sea and go to our brothers in the hills. So we shall save ourselves alive. There shall we build our town. There shall be our hunting grounds. Let us return into Cherokee land. Some moon all the Cherokees together may come to the sea, pushing Usherees before us!"

"For a long time," said Meshawa, "the West Wind that is our friend has sung to us of the mountains. Canacaught speaks for the West Wind. Croatan knows it. We go at once. We travel at once, through Secotan country, while Secotans are friendly. You come with us, you pale people who know so much. You come with us, Christopher, with your people!"

"Go far away from the sea!"

"If you stay Osocon come and slay you all. We gone—Meshawa gone!"

The English in Virginia knew it to be truth. *The never-coming ships.* A voice was raised. "Charred bones to welcome them!"

"Live in the mountains," said Meshawa. "You be with *us*—you be Croatans."

"How many days' march?" It was Guest who asked.

It appeared that it was impossible to say. It depended upon warfare, women and children, weather, good or bad hunting, the will good or averse, of various spirits. A migration was a long wandering. Some day Something would say, "This hillside—this river bank—is good for our town!" But many and many days would pass before that. Nowhere were the mountains near. All the country of the Usherees—of the Algonquins—must be left behind.

The Englishman stood in silence. The company around him hung breathless. England in Virginia considered, or tried to consider, or, so worn it was, let the first impulse or emotion choose for it. After a moment voices arose. "The ships will not come!—We have no food, and winter is drawing on!—Osocon will never leave us alive!"

Guest spoke. "Friends, when the Governor left us, he put in the hands of Master Dare a written instruction as to what to do in case our island should be so threatened, whether by Spaniards or by hostile Indians, as to make it too perilous a place for our abiding. Taking the *Little Bess* and what canoes we had, we were to make for whatever shore, whether Chesapeake or a nearer, that seemed of likeliest promise. That is, he did not leave us pinned to this town that is burned,

nor this island that is now a trap. But he thought of the *Little Bess* with us, and of choice still in our hands. Certes, he thought that we should still be by the sea, or at the most a little way up some broad river. He never saw the long, too-long delay and what has happened. My thought is this: If we go, it will be hard to come again to the shore, seeing that there will be many and hostile Indians between this Cherokee land that we hear of and blue ocean. And unless Sir Walter sends in power, it will be hard for those, who one day will surely come, to follow and find us. If they are not many and we are afar, it may be impossible. See what we risk! Let us look at it firmly. We may shortly perish in the wilderness, or we may outlive in the wilderness our natural length of days, and yet never see again ocean or tall ship or any English face beside these that now we look into. Look at it closely; what may happen!"

At last spoke Peregrine Wren for the others. "But when all that's envisaged, you think we must go!"

"Unless the ships come this week, I think that very surely we die here! There is some hope in going that we may be reached, or that somehow we may come again, after long while perhaps, to the sea and an English settlement, more happily made than this one!—Let every soul of us make choice, and according to number so be it! Who will go with the Croatans let him or her step to the north of the shadow of that pine tree. Who

would stay upon this island let him or her step to the south."

The pine tree cast a long straight shadow. A voice said, "Before we choose, Master Guest, tell us truly what you think about the ships!"

Guest stood a moment in silence, a big figure, fair, gray-eyed and high of look, then: "God direct me, and keep me from a false saying unaware! I make my guess that there arose sudden great war with Spain, and that the ships are needed or withheld. If it be so, I believe that England will outlast, and that English ships will come to Roanoke. But I do not know when."

The shadow of the pine lay a clear, dark line upon trodden earth. "Choose you first, sir!" cried one. "You're our natural leader, now that Master Dare is dead!"

Christopher walked to the Croatan side of the tree. The first to follow was Matthew Fullwood, and then Peregrine Wren. The third was Dame Cis, in her arm the orphaned babe Virginia, and her hand upon Miles Darling. After her came Susan.

"Oh, aye!" ejaculated Mother Goode. "Come, the rest of you women!" She crossed to the Croatan side, Audrey and Winifred following. Her son, John Goode, said, "I'll go with Mother," and did so. Arnold and Joyce Archard went next, then Ambrose and Elizabeth Viccars. Master Cooper, the minister, was slain, but his daughter, Eunice, crossed with the others. These were all

the women living. Tom Darnel and Edward Barecombe crossed together—Will Gosling came after, with an oath. Robert Brace was among the slain. A voice cried, "We're all going to Croatan.—Turn Indian and keep England alive!" In the end all crossed to north side of shadow.

When they saw themselves all together there arose, a strange sound to themselves, broken laughter. "That is good!" quoth Peregrine Wren. "It's best medicine. What! The spirit cannot be killed—neither there nor here, then nor now! Maintain the spirit!"

Guest spoke. "We are here one family—no larger now than many a family that gathers, at home, at Yuletide in hall or grange! Let us look at things and ourselves in that light. Let us one and all take the fatherly, motherly, brotherly, sisterly part. We have with us a year-old babe and a little lad. Let us hold them for our center and banner. The one has never known England; the other has known it but as an infant knows. Mutual love and help, amity and wisdom with the Indians and ourselves—that, to them, be our gift and our loyalty! Else they perish, or grow wild without a Christian thought or way. I think," said Christopher, "that, having made our decision, we should kneel and say a prayer.—Matthew Fullwood, lacking Master Cooper, you are best at this. Will you pray?"

They prayed, by the dazzling sea, with the City of Raleigh in ashes about them. The seven In-

dians watched and nodded their heads. "They speak to the *Nanehi.*"

When they rose from their knees Meshawa hastened them. "Go before dark."

All gathered from the fort and from the ruins what was not ruined or what they could carry. Their arms, what powder and shot was left, what tools, what books and clothing, medicaments and small articles of kinds could be taken in the canoes, they fastened into bale and bundle. Guest, who quietly was become Governor, would have no useful thing that they could take left behind, and here Meshawa supported him.

It was to leave a message for the ships that might come this year, this month, nay, this week. This week, despite Canacaught's vision. They had ink and paper. To write down the fortunes of the Colonists, that was easy and must be done. But how to secure that the writing would ever come to English eyes? Hardly anything was more certain than that Osocon in force would presently return, rummage and destroy fort and stockade. Fire would cleanse away for the Roanokes, from their island, English and English building. At last they made six writings and hid them in as many places. These papers told, tersely enough, what had happened, and where they, the surviving English, were bound. "If you are in strength, countrymen, come after us!" They ended with a list of the living. Perhaps one of them might be found and read. Perhaps not.

"Cut something also," said Peregrine Wren, "in the bark of a tree."

"That is good! We will do that."

They chose three trees. Matthew Fullwood, Tom Darnel who was skillful with his knife, and Christopher Guest carved their message. They used but few words. Massacre—sixty living—gone with friendly Croatans toward the mountains. They cut the month and the year. Perhaps the ships coming at last, Englishmen would read these words. Perhaps Osocon, coming first, would see, and divine they were magic, and would deface, stripping the bark from the tree and burning.

Christopher Guest wrought swiftly and deeply with his knife. Meshawa was waiting with an air of "Time presses!" The greater number of the Croatans were already on the march toward the canoes. Guest finished his task. He stood for a moment with his eyes upon the sea, then walked to a second tree, well within the edge of the wood, a tulip tree mantled and festooned by wild grape. Broad leaves and twisted, shaggy stem obscured the smooth pale-gray bark. He pushed them aside and began to carve. Behind him he heard Fullwood and Tom announce that their work was done, and Meshawa's deep voice. "Day running by! Must go—must go!" He had cut only the word CROATAN. He let the vine swing back, put up his knife, and returned to the band that was quitting Roanoke.

So they left the dead City of Raleigh, and those whom they had buried beside the ruins. There was some weeping among the bereaved and those who passioned for the bereaved and for perished hopes. But the most did not weep, but made what cheer they could for themselves and for the others. Christopher, carrying Miles Darling, walked beside Dame Cis. Susan's face was all blubbered for Sylvester Primrose. Dame Cis took from her the babe Virginia. "I'll carry her.—Good-by, Gilbert—good-by, Eleanor!"

Fullwood behind her said, "They are not dead, but sleeping, Dame Cis."

The boy Miles was consistently cheerful. "Are we going in canoes? Will you let me fish? Virginia can't fish. She's too little!"

"Aye, we're going in canoes. And you must learn now to be very good and dear to Virginia. You must become her knight."

So they went, carrying their goods, a league through the forest to the hidden Croatan canoes, to which now were added those of Roanoke. They entered and sat them down in the long, narrow and graceful craft. About them were the naked, painted rowers.

Canoe after canoe filled, put out from shore. It was a high, bright autumn afternoon, and when the sun set a half-moon would give light. The creek lay bordered by enormous trees. They passed from out their shadow and beyond the reeds that stood up straight and dreamed in the

still air. Canoe after canoe came away from the land into Pamlico that to-day lay still, still, with only a western zephyr.

All swung toward Croatan. They made two lines, graceful, like birds; the paddles dipped; they were going to Croatan, they were going home, they were going to a new home, to the Island of Croatan and then, after a few days, away from the island, to the mainland, into the deep forest, through friendly Secotan, west, west, west,—far away west to the gray mountains. Roanoke Island grew smaller, smaller. To one hand lay Osocon's land, a long, low smudge upon the horizon; to the other stretched the barrier sand, and without that the long rollers of Atlantic. Plymouth bells—were Plymouth bells ringing?

CHAPTER X

GOLDEN HAWK AND YOUNG THUNDER

GOLDEN HAWK had for his hunting mate Young Thunder. They had grown up together in Croatan Town, below the mountains, playing together at everything they were to do when they were grown. In one and the same moon they had received from the wise men their Initiation into manhood, the Cherokee nation, the tribe of the Heron. As to that Initiation they to some measure exchanged experiences. Golden Hawk told Young Thunder, "I saw so and so, and I felt so and so—"

And Young Thunder would come in, "Now me! I saw a giant man with a bow and arrow standing in the clouds. He threw the bow and arrow down, and I was to pick them up. And then I saw a girl coming through the corn. At first I thought it was Red Dawn or Stream-under-sun, and our corn fields. But then I saw that the corn was thrice as tall, and the girl too. After that everything was black and that lasted a long time. Then I heard thunder and a voice dropped from the sky, 'Your name is Young Thunder!' "

"I felt all that," said Golden Hawk, "and some-

thing more! But I can't tell it somehow. The great word-vine hasn't shaken down the words!"

Golden Hawk and Young Thunder now were fifteen. Young Thunder looked as Meshawa might have looked in youth. He had a magnificence,—Young Thunder! But Golden Hawk overstood that. Golden Hawk was a very superb person.

Winter—winter—winter. A hard winter following a wet summer with little strong sunshine and strong heat. The corn did not do well, the beans moldered on the vine, the pumpkins never properly swelled and put on only the palest gold. By midwinter Croatan store grew dangerously little. Add to that it was not a good year for nuts, and that the river froze thick, and when holes were all properly cut for fishing the fish were found to have gone south in great numbers with the birds. Hunters were the lauded folk this winter. Hunt early, hunt late, bring in all you can! None starved or went nigh to that, but it was a hard winter, with cold and winds and snow and ice. But every Indian hut had a great woodpile. Fire was their friend and the forest that fed it, giving for the picking up rich boughs and cones.

Golden Hawk and Young Thunder would go a-hunting.

"Miles, do not go too far!"

"How far is too far? No, I won't, Mother!"

Said his stepfather, Christopher Guest, "Miles, don't go too far. There is snow coming."

"No, I won't, Father. We are going to the High Rocks and maybe to Big Stag Ford."

"Miles, don't go too far!" from Virginia.

"There is a great moon to-night. Young Thunder and I are going to climb by tree tops and clouds, and shoot the Great Elk and bring him down to the Croatans. Then you won't see him any more, Virginia, in the round moon!"

Young Thunder and Golden Hawk. They had warm, winter shoes, fur inside. They had leggings and shirts of deer skin and each threw over his shoulders and tied around his neck a bear skin. They had long quivers filled with arrows, flint-pointed, and bows of ash. They carried each a pouch, in which, with other things, lay a handful of parched corn. It was early morning, they had had a good breakfast, the sun was shining although there were clouds. They shouted as they parted from the village. They felt free and happy as though wings were at their heels and wings at their shoulders.

Home fell away behind them. They went over the hilltop and down into deep forest. The sky had clouds, but also sun enough to make dancing lights and blue shadows. Upon the ground lay a thin snow, crisp and pleasant under the warm shoe. The air was cold with a kind of dreamy thickening. No wind. Now they went without

speaking, with sharpened eyes and ears, as Indians hunt when they are in earnest.

They came to High Rocks. But it was not a day when the deer were at home. Young Thunder shot a rabbit, but that was little for great, emulative hunters!

The sun went up toward noon. Now there were a number of clouds in the sky and they showed a tendency to run together. Still the sun shone. But no deer, no birds, no small beasts. "They will laugh," said Golden Hawk, "when we come back!"

Young Thunder grunted. "Meshawa couldn't find where there's nothing to find!"

"Let us go to Big Stag Ford."

Young Thunder looked at the sky.

"It won't snow," pursued Golden Hawk, "before night. Kill a stag and draw it home upon the ice!"

The picture smiled and enticed. Without more words, they turned toward the river. Presently they started from a brake a turkey who rose with a heavy clapping of wings. Golden Hawk was swift as any Indian. His arrow followed and overtook and brought down.

Golden Hawk triumphed. "He's big and fat! He's the King of the Turkeys! Look at his wattles and feathers!"

"Well! It's the King of Rabbits too!"

"I'll make crowns of the feathers—one for me and one for Virginia!"

"Even if we don't get the stag—if you kill another rabbit and I kill a turkey—"

"It won't make them say, 'Born hunters!' Come on! I'll get the stag."

But when they came to the frozen river the sky was as gray as it. "Cross!" said Golden Hawk. "The forest on the other side is better!"

"We're a good way from home. The Old Woman Who Snows is coming fast from the mountains."

"We'll go faster than she, going back, down the river, drawing by his horns the King of the Stags!"

The river was frozen thick. Leafless willows, leafless sycamores, leafless maples, leafless alder and hazels bordered it, standing still against white-gray sky. Golden Hawk and Young Thunder crossed it, winter shoe upon ice, rabbit and turkey at back, eye for the great gray sky, seen more clearly, widely, here than in the forest. "There is a snowflake!"

Said Golden Hawk, "It does not know how to snow in Cherokee country! You should see it snow in England!"

"If you say that to-day, the Old Woman will come fast and faster! See! Other flakes!"

"It snows in England with flakes as large as leaves. The streets in the town are all white, and it comes up around the houses and the church, and people walk in it, swinging lights and crying out, 'All's well!'"

"If you don't mind the Old Woman Who Snows, of course a real Cherokee doesn't! Are we going to Big Stag Ford?"

On this side the river the forest stood huge and close. There ran a shallow ravine and at the bottom a small stream, now ice like the river. It was here that they saw the stag's antlers, and waited, arrow fitted, still as the ice, still as the gray trunks, until he should move and give right target. He moved, head, shoulders, body came before them. It was Golden Hawk's arrow and Young Thunder's arrow too that went singing and slew the King of the Stags.

"I told you—I told you—I told you!" shouted Golden Hawk and leaped in the air and laid hold of the antlers. "I am a *jossakeed*—I am a prophet!"

"I too!" quoth Young Thunder. "It snows."

The snow came in very large flakes and at first slowly. But before they had each taken out of pouch the thong which hunters carried for such purposes, and knotted the two into one and doubling it for strength tied it to the antlers, the large flakes were falling very thickly. By the time they dragged the stag out of ravine and upon the ice of the river, the ice was thickly powdered with snow; snow was further whitening the broad, outstretched, pallid arms of the sycamores. The air became a gray whirl, and the sun, somewhere in the west, had put a cloak over his head and was as naught.

"Ha!" said Golden Hawk and Young Thunder.

"It doesn't matter! The river is a plain road."

The snow fell so thickly that it blinded. Progress was slow, with the stag behind. Not only had the sun cloaked himself, but it was evident that he was going away. He had his town behind the mountains. He did not like the Old Woman Who Snows and hurried to his lodge where he sat amid his heaped corn and his wampum.

The youths went slowly for the snow blinded. The stag was heavy behind them, the rabbit and turkey upon their shoulders. They had been afoot since dawn, had eaten their parched corn, but it was not much. Fatigue put his arms around them and went along. The snow began to be thick fur about their ankles. Dark came down. Now they had upon their hands both the Old Woman Who Snows and Old Night.

"We haven't much more than passed High Rocks."

"Are we going around Big Bend? I could tell by the feel of the ice and the wind, but the snow gets between. It's cold. We may have to build a fire and spend the night."

"I want to get home. I promised."

"If we can't we can't," said Young Thunder.

The Old Woman Who Snows drove against them with chariots, and moreover enlisted her brother, the North Wind. Old Night helped.

At last was nothing in the world to do but to get to the bank, find a hollow that would somewhat shelter, gather wood in the darkness, use Golden

Hawk's most precious possession, flints for striking fire and tinder in a little box, make a fire, get warm, cut meat from the stag, broil it, eat, sleep by the fire.

An outcrop of rock formed a half-cave. It cut the wind from them. The snow was blown, a veil in the darkness, out from them, not into their shelter. Clean stone formed a floor. They knew how to gather dry wood, even through night and storm. They were forest acolytes and knew her ways and the ways of tempest and darkness. Fire! Oh, how good was fire! They skillfully laid the wood and skillfully made the fire, and were grateful to the Good Spirit. Being so young, they had not tobacco with which to thank Okee, solemnly burning a pinch. Fire and warmth! The red light coursed outward into the night. Where it struck trunk and bough, these came into vivid relief; all else was total black. Meat, deer meat. Each possessed a knife. Golden Hawk's was made in England; Young Thunder's had a flint blade fashioned by Big Knifemaker who made them better than any one. They carved skillfully what they needed, and with a long stick for spit, broiled their supper. Outside, for thirst, lay the heaped snow. Golden Hawk and Young Thunder were warmed and fed.

Stretched by the fire, they heard the wind howling outside, the trees wailing. The Old Woman Who Snows was snowing still, snowing hard, meaning to whiten the world, cover it all over, deep, deep! Golden Hawk and Young Thunder were

tired. They saw Sleep, very pleasant in aspect, walking on a path, beckoning them to go with her into her strange, dim, sweet land, where you ate cakes, where you drank mead that were all hers and no one else's. They saw Sleep, but still for a while they chose Awake,—so good was the fire, so good the sight of the heaped game, so strong the sense of their own prowess, so dear was comradeship! Golden Hawk—Young Thunder; Young Thunder—Golden Hawk. They talked. There was always an infinity of things to talk about. Silent yet in the throng, for that became their years, Golden Hawk and Young Thunder, off from Croatan town like this, were eloquent to each other. They were great story tellers. The young Indian had Cherokee lore; the English youth the lore of an island afar.

In the firelit hollow, rock on three sides of them, on the fourth the Old Woman Who Snows and her brothers Winter Night and North Wind, Young Thunder told yet another version of Wasi and the Horned Snake, King of all the Rattlesnakes. Young Thunder sat with his knees drawn toward his chin, and his black eyes on the red coals. Golden Hawk lay flat, elbows on stone, bronze cheek in hand. The Horned Snake now was a man and now was a snake. His tribe could not turn into men—they remained rattlesnakes, though very powerful and wise ones. But the King of them was King because he could do this very thing. He knew medicine. All the folk in his town had rat-

tles and they rattled so that hunters ever so far away said, "We are drawing too near the town of the Rattlers; it is easy to perish over there!" and they went fast away through the forest. The town of the Rattlers was set on a mountain beside a river so wide it was like the water Young Thunder and Golden Hawk could just remember. But the King did not have a rattle, but had a sharp, glittering horn on his forehead and below the horn a precious stone, that was now red and now yellow and now green and now blue, and that turned like an eye. It was Great Medicine. Both the horn and the precious stone were Great Medicine.

Everybody in High Country—which is to say, Cherokee Country—wanted that clear, shining stone. Twice a year the Cherokees held a Great Council, so many from each village, and they chose a young brave to go try. When he was chosen, they all made a feast and a dance and the priests and jossakeeds gave him enchantments and showed him himself slaying the King of the Rattlers and taking the stone. Then he painted himself red and white and yellow, and put around his forehead twelve eagle feathers, and went alone through the forest, for that was the rule. And when he came to a certain tree, there he began to hear the rattling. The Great Council and all the villages knew that he went on, because he never came back.

That continued for as many moons as there are scales on a fish, or hairs on a fox, or feathers on an

eagle. Twice a year a young man traveled to the very broad river and the great stony mountain where on every stone sat a rattler, and the King of them all on a high, black stone, with his sharp horn and his magic fastened safe in his forehead. He traveled thither, but he never came back, and the band of priests and jossakeeds and war men who followed him far off until they came to that tree and waiting there heard only a rattling as if all the mountains were coming down, a rattling and a hissing and a kind of song.

So it went on and it went on and went on, and the Cherokees couldn't get the magic that by then they badly needed.

Now there was Wasi, and when he was as young as you and I, or even younger, he used to leave his village, saying that he was going hunting or fishing, as the case might be. But when the corn patches and all were out of sight, he said, "Trees, trees, be my friends!" and went straight to the tree where everybody halted. It was a long way, but Wasi had learned running from the Chief of the Stags.

When he came to the tree he heard the rattling, though he could not see the river and the mountain, they were so far. So he sat down under the tree and thought and thought.

Going home, he always drew out an arrow and fitted it to the bow and shot some one with feathers or some one with fur, or he took out his long string of cedar and his hook of bone and caught three

fish. So his village and his lodge and his mother did not know where Wasi went.

Wasi became a grown young man and all the maidens loved him.

The Cherokees held a very great pow-wow, for now more and more they needed the magic the King of the Rattlesnakes had stolen. The priests made their enchantments and all the young men stood in a row, and the white stone that was thrown fell at the feet of Wasi.

Wasi was glad.

He painted himself red and white and yellow and he tied twelve eagle feathers around his head. He took his bow and his arrows and his tomahawk and his knife, and he went all alone through the forest to the tree from which you could hear the town of the Rattlers. The tree was a pine and it or its mother was standing there when first the Cherokees crept through a hole out of the earth.

Wasi sat down under the tree. He knew that the priests and the jossakeeds and the war men were following him, but they would not come near the tree until he stood up and went on. At the foot of the tree lived a lizard, and Wasi talked to the tree and the lizard both. He had been here so often before, you see, and had sat and thought and talked, so they all felt at home.

"You are all painted and plumed," said the pine tree. "I see that the white stone fell at your feet!"

"Your quiver is full of arrows," said the lizard, "and your tomahawk and knife are so keen that I

fear to trust myself near them. I see that the white stone fell at your feet!"

Then the lizard ran upon Wasi's knee and laughed and the pine tree laughed. "How many have we seen going to kill the King of the Rattlers and take his magic? But none just like you, Wasi! None quite so friendly, Wasi!" And they laughed again, the lizard and the tree.

"In my town," said Wasi, "we talk a good deal about the part of friends."

"Let us all counsel together," said the tree, and the lizard nodded his head.

The jossakeeds and the priests and the war men came to the tree when Wasi had left it and camped there—for that was their habit—until they should be certain that another young Cherokee man was not coming back. They did not expect much of Wasi, who was a dreamer. "Now," they said, "he is by the big river!" and, "Now he has come to the mountain," and, "Now he is at the first house, and there is a vast shadow and that is the King of the Rattlers!"

But they were mistaken, as sometimes they are.

Wasi was in the forest hunting. True, when he went over hills he could see the big river and the big stony mountain. But they were at one side now, not straight in front. Any hour of the day when he stopped to listen he could hear on the wind the rattlesnake folk, all hissing and rattling and talking together. When the sun stood right overhead they were the loudest. But Wasi hadn't

much time to spend in listening. He hunted, and when he had killed the three hugest stags of those parts, he turned woman and stripped them of their skins and tanned these. He built himself a lodge and stayed in the forest.

The great deer skins dried in the sun and wind. Wasi went to the big river, but on this side from the great, stony mountain. The water was so wide you could just see the mountain, but for all that, the rattling and hissing and talking in the town of the Rattlers hurried across. By the big river, in warm sand and mud and reeds, is the town of the Turtles, and they are a slow, peaceful folk that draw into themselves and like to be let alone.

Wasi sat on the sand in the midst of this nation and made them a speech, "Folk Whose House Goes With You! I am a stranger and in great need of a house. But it will take a great many of your houses to make my house. Give me so many, and when I return from the town of the Rattlers, I will make you a present of a bit of the King's Horn. It is very good medicine indeed and will cause you to live long and to prosper."

"Ha!" said the chiefs. "All his strong men will leap upon you. Even if we give you ever so many houses, there will be cracks between!"

"All the same," said Wasi, "give me the houses. Who takes no risk will get no magic!"

So he took twice twenty of their shells and went back to his lodge with them all hanging and clat-

tering about him. The skins of the stag chiefs were waiting for him, stretched over poles.

Wasi turned woman again, and fashioned with his knife and his bone needle and his thread of twisted fiber such a dress as never did you see! Moccasins and leggings and shirt and mantle-on-head were all one, and they fitted close, and when he put them on you would say, "What a strange man with such a thick skin!" The new skin went over his hands and his fingers and over his face. There were just two small holes for his eyes to look through. It fitted, and Wasi took it off and lay before the lodge, smoking and thinking, a whole day.

When the sun set he opened his otter-skin bag and took out a great medicine and swallowed it. It is said that the birds showed him how to make that medicine. Now, when he went to sleep, his body lay in the lodge, but his spirit came forth in a small white cloud, like a puff of smoke from the calumet of the Great Spirit. He could go where he pleased when he was like that, but he could not *do* anything, being without his bow and arrows or his knife or even his hands. He went like that to the town of the Rattlers.

Before dawn Wasi came back to his body in the forest. He went in like a stream of smoke, and his body yawned and stretched and sat up, and it was red dawn behind the pine trees.

This day Wasi took the houses of the turtles and bored holes around each and sewed them on his

dress of deer skin, house touching house. When it was done you never saw the like of that!

Wasi cleaned his lodge and laid a fire. "I shall be back, and it's well to have things ready for a tired man!" Then he put the dress he had made on his back and went off through the forest to the Big River. And you may know that long before this the priests and jossakeeds and war men waiting by the tree had said, "Wasi never will return!" and had gone home to the Cherokee towns.

But Wasi was by the Big River. And what do you think was there but a canoe, kept there by the King of the Rattlesnakes as a vaunt. "Come in! Come over!" said the canoe, for the King had smeared it with his magic.

"I will directly," said Wasi, and unfastened his pack, and pretty well hidden he was from the mountain by the reeds and the trees.

He laid down his bow and quiver and tomahawk and knife and bag of otter skin and crown of feathers, and when he was quite naked save for his red and white and yellow paint, he put on that dress upon which he had worked a whole moon. Inside he was Wasi, painted red and white and yellow, then he was all deerskin and doubled at that, and then he was in a house made of turtle houses. Nothing of Wasi showed but his eyes. So he picked up his bow and arrows and tomahawk and knife and otter skin pouch and said, "Let us go!" The canoe and he went over the big river, but the canoe groaned at every stroke. At last

they came right under the big mountain and Wasi got out.

First there was high grass. He heard the town above him talking, and then the first of the King of the Rattlesnakes' braves rattled and struck. That poisoned arrow came against one of the turtle houses between Wasi's ankle and knee. It couldn't do anything, it couldn't get through the strong wall. Wasi slew that rattler with his knife.

Then came blackberry bushes, and Wasi's dress was very good indeed for getting through them. It was as though all the blackberries on earth grew here, and most of the small birds in the air were come to get the blackberries, and as many of the rattler folk as there are leaves on a tree were come for the birds. When Wasi entered the patch they left the birds and would kill him. But Wasi killed them with his tomahawk and his knife.

Next, the mountain began to go up steeply, and there were many small stones and small trees, hot in the sunshine, and there were huckleberries, and by every stone and bush and tree coiled a rattler, young or old, and the din they made was worse than ten war dances. When they saw Wasi they gathered themselves into ranks and came against him from all sides. They fought and fought, but they did nothing, he was behind such strong walls. He slew them with his arrows and his tomahawk and his knife, and the sun had gone many arrow flights up the sky.

Next, the mountain grew very steep, and here were great bare ledges and slabs of rock, hot and smooth, standing every which way, with little bushes between and naked blue sky above, and these were the first lodges of the King of the Rattlesnakes' town. And now the din and anger was so great that it was as though the Four Winds had joined together and were shaking the world so that it rattled. And there were so many of the King's braves that it seemed as though one Iroquois was standing against all the Algonquins in the world. And they coiled and sprang against Wasi. But not one could get through his strong walls, and not one could find a crack. His eyes kept them from striking at his eyes. He slew and slew, and the sun went other arrow flights over the sky, and they fought up into the town, where all the rocks were high, and there were clefts and ledges, and the rattler folk came out of the clefts, and stretched themselves over the ledges, and they coiled and struck, and coiled and struck again, and the whole mountain rattled, and they were like to burst with anger and despite. And still Wasi went on up to the top, and he looked up and saw a high black rock and a shadow, and that was the King of the Rattlesnakes. His horn glittered, and the stone in his forehead burned.

At first he seemed a snake and then a man, and then a snake again and then a man. When he was snake Wasi seized and choked him with his hands that had plates from the turtles' houses over them

like fish scales. When he was a man, Wasi and he wrestled. You must know that Wasi was the Greatest Wrestler. But the King of the Rattlesnakes put him to it.

Only he couldn't stay a man, and Wasi could.

At last Wasi took the horn and the stone from his forehead. Then there was only a very great rattlesnake.

With his tomahawk Wasi killed him, and then he put the horn and the stone in his otterskin pouch, and went down the silent mountain. When he came to the big river the canoe was sunk. Wasi took off his dress that had served him and let that sink too in the water. Then Wasi stood in his red and white and yellow paint and he bound his weapons and his otterskin bag on his shoulders and swam the big river. He came out of the river by the town of the turtles, and all the turtle folk gathered around him, and he took out of his bag the horn of the King of the Rattlers and broke off a bit and gave it to them, and that is the reason why that nation remains so old and wise and safe in the world. Then he went to his lodge in the forest and rested there a day and a night.

A hunter came to the nearest town of the Cherokees and said that he had stopped under the tree whence the young men always started, and that he did not hear the great stony mountain and the town of the Rattlers. At first he thought something ill had made him deaf, but then he heard a woodpecker and a squirrel and a leaf dropping beside

him. But he did not hear the town of the Rattlers.

So they did not know what to make of that, and the priests and jossakeeds and the war men all came through the forest to the tree. And through the forest to meet them came Wasi, all red and white and yellow and with eagle feathers round his head.

And that is the way the Cherokees got the magic that makes them the bravest and the most knowing of all the Iroquois!

"My turn now!" said Golden Hawk, and put upon the fire another faggot.

CHAPTER XI

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

THE flame leaped, the cave wall shone. "I will tell," said Golden Hawk, "about Saint George, for he's the Saint of England."

"Ah, Ah, I'd like to see England!" grunted Young Thunder.

"I saw it once. I can remember something. It's not like anything here. It's all color and strange big shapes and glory.—George was a knight. He wore armor and he rode a horse and he carried a banner as blue as the sky. (Armor and horse and banner," mused Miles. "Father has shown me how to make a banner.) Well, George was Sir George, he was not yet Saint George. But the Queen had knighted him."

Young Thunder nodded knowingly. They had played at knighting.

"The Queen had knighted him, and said, 'Rise, Sir George, Good Knight and True!' So he rose and they hung a sword about him and put spurs on his heels. And he said to the Queen, 'Madam your Grace, now I will go ride and seek my *devoir.*' So he backed his horse out of the court and he rode away—Sir George Cappadocia."

"Ho! I know what it is to seek your *devoir!*" cried Young Thunder. "Next year I am going to see the villages of the mountain Cherokees. And if Algonquins stir there am I upon the warpath!"

"That is just wandering and fighting!" answered Golden Hawk. "I talk of seeking and finding your *devoir* and getting it done. And now, if you'll stop interrupting, I'll tell the story.

"Sir George rode away through the city. And it was as big as all the Cherokee towns put together. And there wasn't just one house of stone like ours, but all the houses were of stone. And there were heathen churches called temples. And there was a market place, and the things that were traded in that market place would make the sky turn round you with desire. And there were guild houses—it's hard to explain those—and there were statues, and those are white rocks cut into the shape of men and women. He rode and he rode and he went out of the gate in the stockade—in the city wall—and there wasn't a path like ours but a wide, white road. Sitting on his horse he went on and on until he was in the forest, for you see about cities they hew all the forest down, and the corn and bean fields are a thousand times bigger than ours. So he went on and on, and the forest grew tall and thick, and the sun said, 'Ha! it is bed time!' Then the horse spoke and said, 'Master Sir Knight, this is a dangerous forest because on the other side of it is the land and city of King Saba, and it is all in mourning. Whoever goes there mourns.'

" 'Why do they do that?' asked Sir George Cappadocia.

" 'Because there is a great marsh, and a Dragon lives in it, and he comes out and kills the corn as soon as it is sprouted, and more than that he kills the folk of the land. He kills so many every moon.' "

"Dragon? Dragon?" said Young Thunder.

"A dragon," answered Golden Hawk, "is like the Giant Bear and the Giant Wolf and the Giant Panther and the King of the Rattlesnakes and the Giant Eagle and a wicked man's ghost all together, and it becomes the terror that walks by night. It doesn't need to touch, it slays with its breath. So the horse said, 'Master Sir Knight, I counsel that we turn and go some other way.'

"But Sir George clapped his hands together. 'Now I see my *devoir!*' Then the horse trembled all over.

"So he rode on and the forest was very green and the grape vine was in bloom, so the air was sweet. There was a tree that put a bough across the path, above his head, and on the bough sat a bird and it was singing so loud and sweet, Sir George had never heard such singing. So he stopped his horse, whose name was Faithful, to listen, and suddenly, like that—" Golden Hawk threw a branch upon the fire—"he understood the bird. It was singing of a princess."

Young Thunder moved where he lay by the fire. "Yes, a princess."

"The princess's name was Sabina. The bird sang that she was white like the plum blossom and her eyes as blue as the sky, and her hair as golden as the sun and it came all around her like a cloud, and she wore silk and pearls and a golden shoe. The bird sang full sweet about her, and Sir George listened and thought that he would like to see that princess. But then the bird changed its note and now it was so sad that the tears must spring to hear it. There was a Spirit in that land to which King Saba prayed. He prayed about the Dragon that was making misery—misery forever. That Spirit was stern and strange, sang the bird, and his jossakeed told the king a terrible thing."

"Yes, yes!" said Young Thunder.

"There was a hill that rose up near that marsh where the Dragon lived. On the hilltop lay a great stone shaped like a bed. The princess must be laid there, with her yellow hair about her and her face like the plum flower and her eyes like the sky—laid there and tied there with a great thong. Because she was the dearest thing King Saba had, and the Dragon could be bought so, and only so. It seems," said Golden Hawk thoughtfully, "that that is the way with Dragons. When it was done, all were to depart, her father and mother and friends, all go away, all go home, and leave her there lonely, on the stone bed, on the hilltop, with the empty blue sky over her, and below the marsh and the Dragon that would come running and gliding up the hill. The Dragon had agreed, said the

jossakeed. He would destroy her in place of her people, and when it was done he would go down the far side of the hill and depart out of the land. The Spirit had one other word, sang the bird upon the branch. There would be one day while the Princess lay upon the great stone. And if in that time one came and slew the Dragon and climbed the hill and untied the thongs and lifted the Princess and bore her with him to the city, then instead of blackness and cold and cries of sorrow would be break of day and sun of May and wedding bells a-ringing.—And then the bird made a shower of singing notes and flew away.

"Faithful, the horse, said, 'Master Sir Knight, that Dragon has slain thousands and is the most fearsome thing in all the world!'

"Sir George Cappadocia answered, 'There is always one after the thousands, and the sun is shining on my *devoir.*'

"Faithful trembled, but he said nothing more. So he rode on until he was quite through the forest. Between the trunks of the last trees they saw cleared land more than you have ever seen, Young Thunder, but I have seen such cleared land in England, and far off there stood King Saba's city, and turn the other way and you saw a sharp hill, and at the foot of it a great marsh dozing in the sun. And under a pine tree, close by Sir George, was sitting a hare and the hare was breathing hard. 'Here is one who has been running!' said the Knight. 'What was the haste, gray hare?'

" 'Can't you see?' answered the hare, 'the line of folk returning from that hill to yonder city? They are all in black. They are wailing. I ran away from sorrow. First I tried the hilltop, but a woman was lying there all alone and weeping. I hate and fear sorrow, so I ran to this forest. That is why I am panting so.'

" 'You will spend much of your life,' said Sir George Cappadocia, 'in running. Which is the best way to enter the marsh?'

" 'There is no best way,' answered the hare and starting up, ran off.

"But Sir George rode on across the cleared land to the marsh. The reeds were very tall and some were green and some were brown and they grew out of black mud, but there was a kind of beaten way that the Dragon himself had made. And now Sir George Cappadocia got down from his horse and said, 'Faithful, you go around the marsh to the foot of the hill where it faces the city. Wait for me there!'

"Then two big tears ran down from Faithful's great eyes. He said, 'Master Sir Knight, I will wait so you will come!' And he turned and went around the hill. But Sir George drew his sword and went into the marsh. And as he went he began to hear a heavy breathing and a shuffling like the Giant Bear when he came to Ioskeha's corn house—"

"Wait there a moment," spoke Young Thunder. "Listen—Golden Hawk!"

The Old Woman Who Snows and her brother the North Wind were still at work. The forest still groaned, rattled, and at times shouted. Their fire blazed. The outgoing light struck the trunks of the nearest trees, made them seem quivering, living. The snow also, just before their cavern entrance, lay a scintillant, wonderful carpet. But beyond this lit half-moon all was black, black and howling. The two boys sprang to their feet. "Something cried!"

"Some one shouted!"

"Would they send out for us? They don't know where to come.—Maybe up-river Indians going by?"

"They wouldn't have shouted."

"There again!" They took up their bows and arrows.

"It's a weak cry!"

"Maybe it's a ghost or an Evil One!—You've got the most magic. Say it quick, say it quick, Golden Hawk!"

Golden Hawk intoned:

"Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on—

"In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

"If thou'rt good, stay,
If thou'rt evil, begone!"

"Something's moving through the bushes—there, by that tree!"

Golden Hawk and Young Thunder stood with bows bent, arrows against the string. Into the lit half-circle stumbled a boy of about their own age, stumbled and fell with a moaning cry. Arms outstretched, he lay upon the magic carpet of the fire-lighted snow. He was in rags, rags of true cloth. For all that the elements had done to him, the light showed that he belonged to Europe, not America. There was no sound behind him in the night, save the sound of the North Wind and the tormented forest. He was a lone, a strange, half-frozen, starving wanderer.

Golden Hawk and Young Thunder dragged him in and laid him by the fire. They chafed his body and put bits of food between his lips. Both were excited, but all the blood in Golden Hawk's body drummed and sang. "White! He's not Indian. A white boy. White—white! Who's behind him? Mayhap Virginia's grandfather! Mayhap Sir Walter Raleigh!"

At that moment the lost-and-found struggled back to himself. He sat up in the firelight. He spoke. And Golden Hawk could not understand a word he said. "What are you talking about? Speak English, can't you?"

He spoke again, but it was not English.

Miles Darling or Golden Hawk—both names were used—had received, was receiving, an excellent education, his mother, his stepfather, Per-

egrine Wren and Matthew Fullwood, not to speak of others, all being engaged therein. He remembered now, of course. There were French and Spaniards and Flemings and Italians and Germans beside English. Very good, then! This pale, this dark-haired and dark-eyed boy, nigh dead from hunger and cold, all in rags, appealing, clutching at your arm, wasn't English at all. He was one of those others, who were now at peace and now at war with the English. Which one? And if he were not English—then again the ships and Governor John White and Sir Walter Raleigh were a dream, a tale beside the fire! He beat hand against hand in impatience. "Where do you come from? Who are you? Are there any coming after you?" But that exhausted and ragged being went on in his strange tongue, and now his eyes were glittering and his gestures wide. Presently he began to sing, and then, manifestly, to talk to folk who were not there.

"Fever," said Young Thunder. "He's very sick."

The Old Woman Who Snows and her brother, the North Wind, went home after the middle of the night. The forest became as still as it had been noisy. When day broke it was a white world, soft and silent like—like nothing in any world but itself. The pines and hemlocks were all stroked downward and piled with white; the leafless trees stood stiffly, each great bough streaked with white. A foot of snow was upon the ground. The sun came up, a red, round ball. The breath went be-

fore one like a cloud. The fire still burned in the half-cavern, and that skeleton-thin, ragged youngster with burning cheeks and burning eyes yet raved in a tongue that was not English.

Golden Hawk and Young Thunder, hacking and breaking boughs, fashioned a sledge. When it was done, they laid the fevered one upon it and bound him there, for else he would have flung himself off. "Lie still! Lie still!" quoth Miles Darling. "You're going to friends!" His eyes devoured the ragged, starving, fevered one. "Don't you die!" he said. "You'll break my heart if you do!"

He felt like crying, he felt like throwing himself upon the newcomer and crying to him to get well, not to die, to live, to live so that he could talk and show things, get up and be company. Here was some one, some one just as old as Miles Darling and no older—a boy and not an Indian one. His very self cried, "O live, and be comrade!" Golden Hawk felt no disloyalty to Young Thunder—but Miles Darling thought and felt, "My age—a boy from Europe!"

The two half-dragged, half-lifted the sledge down to the river. Slow work it was, but when the ice was reached, easier. The sun was up, the day was still. They dragged the sledge toward home, upon the ice-clad, snow-mantled river. The sun rose higher; they rounded a bend of the stream and saw coming toward them Christopher Guest and three or four Indians.

CHAPTER XII

THEY HEAR OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

THE threescore English, in the town of the Croatans, below the mountains, had built for themselves houses not unlike the Indian houses, and two or three not unlike English cottages, and one larger house, two-storied and of stone, for manor house, or at need, castle. In this house, a wonder to all Indians, dwelled Christopher Guest and his wife, Dame Cis, their two small children, Humphrey and Philippa, Miles Darling and Virginia Dare, the physician, Peregrine Wren, the maid Susan and Eunice Cooper.

The great lower room—the "Hall" they called it—had a fireplace where burned logs of a man's length and girth. So mightily did they burn on the evening of the day of the sledge down the river that the radiance poured across and lit and warmed the stairs upon which at the moment were seated Miles and Virginia. From an upper room came down to them voices, the voice of Dame Cis whom they both called "mother", of Guest whom both called "father", of Doctor Wren, and of that miracle to make the heart beat, that young European wanderer, that stumbler upon Golden Hawk

and Young Thunder, who was still raving, shrilly singing and talking.

Said Virginia, "But Mother says the sleeping draught will presently work, and when he wakes up he'll be sensible and can tell us who he is and how he came here—"

They spoke in low tones of awe. "Oh, Virginia, it's wonderful! I was telling about Saint George —and in all Cherokee land there wasn't any boy, except little Humphrey, who's too little to count, like me but I—and then, like that, he was crying out and coming to our fire!"

"Spanish—Father says he's Spanish. But if he lives with us, Miles, won't he be English? But then we live here, and we aren't Indian. Winifred Rose says if we were set down in Plymouth to-day—you and I—the folk would cry, 'The Indian boy and girl!' "

"I know she said it sighingly—so!"

"Yes, she did! Between two sighs."

Virginia Dare laughed. Going on thirteen, slim, long-legged, dressed in doeskin skirt and jacket, in shoes of doeskin reaching halfway to the knee, her brown hair in two braids, she sat with her large brown eyes upon the fire. "Did you tell about Saint George the way I tell it?"

"No! The way you tell it it's all fantastic! You don't know how to tell about a city or a court or a horse, for you've never been out of the forest! You can't even remember the sea. You've never been in England!" Virginia's brown eyes came

around from the fire. "You weren't so old when you were there! My father and mother were in England. They saw cities and the court and horses!"

"Your father and mother! But that isn't you!"

"Isn't it? I don't know. You're boasting because now you've a Spanish boy to hunt with and play with and talk to! Maybe he won't want to hunt and play and talk—and maybe Young Thunder won't care—. Anyhow," Virginia's eyes blazed past him, "I see all by myself, right in that flame, a city and a court and a flock of horses!"

Dame Cis came down the stair. "Hush, children! It seems now that he may go to sleep."

They followed her to the huge fire. "Mother, Mother, how did he come here?"

"I don't know, Miles. Shipwrecked, maybe. Father says his Spanish could always have laid upon a knife blade, and Doctor says his is rusted almost away. And he raves, and there's little to the point. But he seems to have been upon a ship. We must wait till he's himself."

"He won't die?"

"Doctor thinks not.—It's a strange world. Twelve years—and here rolls a Spanish piece into our hands!"

She stood, thinking in the firelight, at thirty-six more than ever warm and brave and fair and sound and good. Forest life that was Spartan life, life of danger and much of toil, life not lacking sorrow and knowing shadow,—all that had marked

her. But as she had not sat down and wailed under it, she was marked too for growth and strength. She kept her deep, sweet voice with the thrill in it.

Susan entered the hall with Jeremy Todd, a third of whose wits had been shocked from him in that long-ago destruction of the City of Raleigh, who would be always in this life only serving lad. Now he placed the trestles and laid upon them the boards. Virginia was curled into the corner of the settle. "Get up, Virginia, and help Susan!"

The supper table was furnished with wooden trenchers, wooden bowls and tankards, wooden spoons, knives of finely chipped flint set in wooden hafts and leathern jacks holding the mead and the ale which they brewed. The kitchen was not far from the hall. Jeremy brought in the haunch of venison, Susan the great bowl of steaming mush made from ground maize, Eunice Cooper the maize bread. Virginia followed, carrying in a shallow dish a piece of honeycomb. After her came the two small children, Humphrey and Philippa, hand in hand, leaving their seat by the kitchen fire where, absorbed, they had listened to Eunice Cooper telling a nursery story while she worked. Miles and Jeremy took the benches from beside the wall and set them on either side the table. Dame Cis spoke to Virginia. "Go tell Father supper is ready. Go quietly!" But her mind said, "She always goes quietly—like a swallow or a fawn or a young brown spirit!"

Virginia climbed the stair to the rudely floored upper rooms. It was not the nearest room, but the farther small one from which came the murmur of voices. She stole to it and the door was open; she might look. The bed was made of skins stuffed with dried grass and supported upon a frame of wood. It had for blankets two bear skins, but the fevered Spanish boy would uncover arm and chest. She stood at the door; she saw him. His cheeks were bright, his dark hair all in elf locks, his face thin and pointed but well-featured. The eyes were shut; they had dark brows and dark lashes. The two men standing over him thought him sleeping, when suddenly he roused again and this time spoke to the point. "Ruy Valdez," he said in Spanish. "My name is Ruy Valdez." The voice broke down into murmurs, the eyes closed again.

"I'll stay," said Wren. "You go down."

"If he says anything more—"

"I'll remember it. It's important."

Guest took Virginia's hand and the two went down the fire-lighted stair. There was good friendship between them He taught her much, she liked to be with him and brought her problems to him for solving; she loved to stand before him and hear him tell of her father and her grandfather. And Dame Cis kept Eleanor Dare in the child's mind and heart, a watered flower, tall and beautiful.

Guest and Virginia came to the fire. "He's

sleeping, Cis. But we have his name. Ruy Valdez."

Miles cried out, "Oh, Father, there's naught to do but to keep him here, is there?"

Christopher's grave eyes smiled. "I suppose you made your fire, Golden Hawk, and drew him to it and saved his life just for that—just for company! But how if he isn't companionable?"

"I've heard you say, sir, that there's plenty of good among the Spanish."

"Oh, aye, as for that! But what is behind," said Guest, "what is behind this Spanish youngster? He was not blown here, a solitary leaf, from Spain, or mayhap from Spanish lands to the south. Well, we must wait and see, or hear—"

"Come to supper," said Dame Cis.

The family, Eunice and Susan and Jeremy and all, took seats at the table. Susan and Eunice cared for the little Humphrey and Philippa. But Miles Darling was still Susan's joy, Susan who would not marry, not for any urging! The dead Sylvester, the living boy growing with a young splendor, filled her heart and head. Eunice was a concentered, still, religious soul who in an England of a century earlier would have found her home in a convent. Christopher Guest blessed the food and all fell to. It had been a long, exciting day, following a sleepless night, with the tempest beating and Miles Darling caught away. Sometimes they called him Golden Hawk. Sometimes he tasted discipline, for he had an energy

that took him wildly here and there and that might injure save as it learned control. But his mother and the man who was truly to him a father felt for Miles Darling a high, a throbbing pride and love and interest. There was more than that. Miles and Virginia, Humphrey and Philippa, the three children of Audrey Tappan and John Goode, the three of Ambrose and Elizabeth Viccars, the five of Winifred Rose and Ned Barecombe,—here was the younger generation of England in the wilderness. Here were the English to come, in the midst of the Cherokee nation. Joyce Archard's son Jack had chosen to wed an Indian girl, Moon-in-water. There were two children, half-English, half-Indian. If England had forever given up the Land of Virginia; if fearful things of which they knew naught had happened; if always the Algonquins would be too strong between them and the sea; if they never came to the sea again and no army of relief came ever to them—then when one by one the men and women who had journeyed through long months with Meshawa and Canacaught to the foot of the mountains grew old and older and died, as Canacaught had died—then here in these children was a root of the white race, a root of England. To preserve it, preserve the white race, preserve England,—the desire and instinct toward that self-preservation needed no long explanation or discussion. Miles Darling and Virginia Dare,—might they love when the time came and marry.

Might they have offspring, sons and daughters. Might they take the headship in their turn, as Christopher and Cecily had taken it. Might they lead England back, or preserve it in the wilderness! Love and hope and pride kept strict guard.

But now what was behind a starving, wandering, Spanish lad?

The master and mistress of this Hall in the forest kept silence, and the sixteenth-century children and subordinates accorded. But in every mind was question. With the elders all the past was walking by in pictures that were met at right angles by vague forms of the future.

Miles took Doctor Wren's supper upstairs. The boy who had come to the fire through snow and wind lay sleeping. Miles whispered, "He'll get well?"

"Aye."

Golden Hawk longed for it. As he stood, looking down upon the flushed face, half in candlelight, half in shadow, he wanted more than almost anything for Ruy Valdez to get well and to stay in Croatan Town. As he went downstairs already he was showing him Bear Den and Rattlesnake Ledge, Otter Pool, Beaver Dam and Eagle Nest.

In the hall the table was cleared, the boards and trestles taken away. There came a knock at the door, rude and thick, as were the shutters across the windows, windows much like loopholes. "Here are the neighbors," said Dame Cis.

In they came, the greater number of the Eng-

lish in the forest. It was their habit to gather twice a week here at the "Hall." But in any event they would have come this night. A white youth, wandering in the winter forest, found by Miles Darling and Young Thunder and brought into town; that was piercing, thrilling, resounding news! What was to follow? Who and how many white persons wandered or marched in the winter forest? Whence did they come? Who were they? What event was Providence thrusting forward? What note was about to strike?

In they came, wiping the snow from their feet, covered Indian fashion. Dionise and Magdalen Harvie, Ambrose and Elizabeth Viccars, gentlefolk living in the largest house of logs; Matthew Fullwood, after Guest and Peregrine Wren, the strongest man among them; Mother Goode, now an old woman and with her John and Audrey; Joyce Archard—Arnold was dead—and her son Jack, Moon-in-water staying at home with the children; Barecombe and Winifred, James Barnaby, Tom Darnel, Will Gosling, and other men. "Come in, folk!" cried Guest, and Miles, Jeremy and Susan busied themselves putting stools and benches.

Ambrose Viccars, a thoughtful man, spoke for them all.

"It's to hear about the Dropped-from-the-sky, Christopher!"

"Aye, aye!"

"Matthew Fullwood says there is but one, but Will Gosling here thinks he saw a host at dusk—"

"There is some one else at the door," said Guest. "Come in, Meshawa!"

Meshawa entered, great chief of the Croatans, felt in council in all the Cherokee towns in this stretch of illimitable forest and hills rising to mountains. Red Chief stood ever by Christopher White Chief, staunch to him, true brother of the forest, refuge and saviour a hundred times over of the English, bringing all his people to acceptance of these quarter-gods living among them. But the English themselves had wrought that acceptance into a steadfast, rooted thing. Will Gosling, Tom Darnel, Ned Barecombe, chastened, were grown helpful rather than the contrary; time and need and Christopher's eye—Christopher's and Matthew Fullwood's—upon them. Meshawa entered in his winter garment of well-softened, fringed and quill-worked skins, in his moccasins, in his mantle, with height and strong frame, and nose of eagle and high forehead sloping to the black scalp lock, with eyes of depth and fire and strong mouth.

All greeted him. He answered, "Hail!" and moved to the bench beside Christopher. Red Chief and White Chief, who never quarreled! He, too, had come from his lodge to hear of this white stranger Young Thunder and Golden Hawk had brought into town.

Above the fire ran a shelf, and above this a rack

held a pike, an harquebus and two swords. Christopher Guest stood by the fire, under the swords, and told the little he knew of the waif in the house. A Spanish boy—his name Ruy Valdez. For the rest, all must wait until the fever left him.

"What do you think?"

"I do not know. Spaniards may be coming this way. He may be a castaway, wandering alone a fearful distance. Or he may have companions and have been lost from them. Wait, wait! We have waited so steadfastly, so long and so cheerfully, friends, that we may wait until to-morrow to know about this!"

And thereupon Peregrine Wren came down the stairs. "He waked, and was himself for some minutes, and now has gone to sleep again. It's simple, Christopher and Red Chief and good friends! We don't need to fear the Duke of Alva and the Inquisition coming up from the sea! His father was captain of Spanish soldiers at Domingo in Hispaniola. The two embarked for Spain, going on some errand or other, the which I could not make out. A hurricane wrecked them on the Florida coast, not far, I reckon, from where our Virginian grant begins. The father was drowned. Less than a dozen men came alive to land. They wandered for days and at last were taken by Indians who bore them eastward and northward. Algonquin, undoubtedly—some tribe below us. A moon ago there was quarrel. Some of the Spaniards were slain outright, three died at the

stake. This boy got away somehow in the night. Since then he has been wandering, coming west always, and at last starving and freezing. Then he saw Miles and Young Thunder's fire through the trees."

A long breath of relief went through the stone house. There was a silence, then spoke Christopher. "We may sleep, friends, to-night, knowing that no Spanish force is coming upon us through the forest.—It was all, Peregrine?"

"No," answered Wren. "There was this beside. I thought 'Best to get an inkling while I can! He may slip back, get worse and die unconscious.' So I held him, and asked him what happened in the world eleven or twelve years ago? What happened in 1587—in 1588? 'In 1588 the Armada went against England.'"

"Ah!" breathed the hall. "Ah!"

"I asked, 'What happened? For whom was victory?' The Armada met a storm, he said. There was long war. But of course the victory went to Spain."

"Ah!" said the hall. "Ah!"

"I asked, 'Did they overrun England?' No, he thought they did not do that. But, of course, Spain won. Now he thought there was peace, except that Spanish ships fought English ships when they came without leave into the Indies' sea.—That is all," said Wren, in a moved voice. "It is enough! He is but a boy and has lived most of his life in the Indies. He may not have things

quite straight, and being Spaniard means seeing never anything but Victory for Spain."

"Aye, we know that. But still—but still—"

"It is seen why we were not saved!"

A woman was weeping.

Another cried, "England—England! Oh, I want the primroses and the old church bells!"

Matthew Fullwood rose from his bench. "And are we not saved? And to these children here are not the wild grape and the blooming plum, and our song and prayer each Sabbath, are they not old church bells and the golden primrose? Where is Life—where we feel and think and see and are—there is God and Home! And we are safe—and England is safe—and Spain is safe. And Christopher Guest and friends all, we have prayed together many a time since the *Lion* and the *Rosemary* left us in Roanoke. Let us pray together to-night, and praise that One in whom great England and great Spain and we and Croatan live and move and have our being!"

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRE HUNT

THE March wind was blowing, four years after the North Wind had rattled the forest the night there arrived Ruy Valdez. The March wind blew and the dead leaves rose and circled. They filled the air like brown birds. The hunters on the great spring hunting expedition would not fire the ring they had drawn, for wind and fire together might leap control. They laid beside their own fires and were jolly and happy. The next day the wind sank, and the line that was miles around was fired. The great party, drawn from three Cherokee villages, divided into ten smaller parties. These had their stations a mile apart. They threw their brands inward, facing one another across a large distance.

The leaves beyond the raked earth caught. There was one vast carpet of leaves, dry, thick. There began the crackling and the leaping of flames. Light smoke arose, and pungent odor. The hunters looked right and left and across, and their eyes met other points of flame and other curls of smoke. The sky was high and blue, the air cordial, the white smoke went up like dance feath-

ers, the smell was right, the smell was a good smell! The flames ran along the earth, a myriad, myriad leaves caught, the great hunting floor they had marked out burst into light and heat. But there was little undergrowth; the great trees withstood, suffering only a blackening of bark to a man's height. The leaf fire blazed furiously, raced, quickly left charred spaces behind. That was in order, the correct procedure! The hunters looked upon a contracting ring of fire, burning brightly, burning gayly, miles around. All the air began to be smoky. Now the mountains could hardly be seen, now the very blue sky was dimmed.

The tenth division of the great party in which were numbered Golden Hawk, Young Thunder, and Eagle Feather that was Ruy Valdez began to move inward over charred earth. Golden Hawk had his bow of ash, his bowstring of finely prepared gut, his arrows of right make, flint-headed, bright-feathered. Young Thunder had his; Eagle Feather his. All were dressed for the great hunt, which meant very slightly dressed, except for weapons. Young Thunder was painted. All were strong and beautiful young men, but Golden Hawk had a Saxon splendor. He looked a half-god, almost a young golden Balder. He was bold and he was gay, sure of hand, sure of eye. It was he of his twenty who first saw the deer springing before the flame, springing madly, this one, outward through a break in the ring, outward over the blackened ground to the cool brown earth sink-

ing downward, away from the mischief ring. His bow was raised, his arrow fixed; it went singing and pierced the stag through the forehead. "First!" cried Golden Hawk and bounded to touch the wide antlers.

But at the moment the doe fell beside the stag. Eagle Feather's arrow, and Eagle Feather was beside him with his knife out. "I, too!" cried Eagle Feather. Young Thunder had bounded to the right. They might not hear the whizz of his arrow for the shouting now of all the party, the roar of flame and the sounds of the terrified woodland, but they made out his jubilant cry.

The fire hunt was begun. The deer, the bear, the fox, the mountain panther and the smaller life fled from the flame. On all sides they fled toward the center. The leaves burned so quickly! Had they known better, they would have made their dash outward, through the blazing ring, risking a scorching, running the gauntlet of the human, falling this one and that one, but a many escaping, plunging down the sloping land, swimming the streams! But they did not know and rushed blindly from the flame, inward, to find themselves faced again by flame, and followed and overtaken by shafts of death.

The fire hunt lasted for days. When one great disk of earth was overburned and overshot, they fired another. All the country, chosen afar from the villages, grew smoky; the air tasted, the air smelled of burning wood. At night characters of

flame; in the day the mountains, gone to sleep, faded out of the scene.

The hunters camped at this point, that, and the other. Here they had shelters of boughs. Here were brought the deer, the bear, the foxes, martens, panthers, badgers, raccoons, opossums, the turkeys, any and everything killed in the great drive. All that was good for food, and all that was good for pelts. Here were the many poles stretched between stumps and the low fires for drying the meat. It was a great harvest! Pack after pack, load on load, would be carried to the several villages concerned, and there still further dried and put away in the storehouses against Winter, Old Winter now asleep, far, far away! To help in this work, or to do most of this work of cutting and stripping and hanging and drying and packing and lifting and bearing, many squaws were along. Whole families, saving young children, were removed to the Great Hunting Ground. It was the spring harvest; work of course, but festival as well, festival for the hunters wildly emulative, each party against each, each individual bent upon the highest score; change of scene and festival for the women, hard worked though they were; but death and no festival, but a funeral pyre for the woodlands, for the brute citizens of the forest. Smoky was the land, the mountains all withdrawn. The high and thick-trunked trees appeared to look mournfully down upon the blasted or partially consumed dogwood and laurel and

scrub oak and seedling pines, upon the charred floor and the ashes of moss and fern, and upon the arrow-pierced, the heaped slain, the four-foot or winged superior beings who lived with the trees, but upon whom now had come a strange foe, to play the blast and the lightning stroke!

The hunters from Croatan Town had two camps, an upper and a lower, beside a rushing stream, pool and cascade, cascade and pool. With the women the two parties might number fifty. This stream gave into their river; the cascades passed, they would raft the meat down. In the upper camp beside Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez, the only paleface was Jack Archard. "Half-Indian" they called him, although he was whole Englishman. But he had Moon-in-water for wife, and his children went like Indian children, and he himself seemed like a man who was glad to get back to the total forest. Perhaps in England he had been secretly homesick, had wished to leap from the sixteenth century down, down, to Britain before the Roman.

"Jack, how many did you get?"

"Seven, Golden Hawk."

"Oh, so little, Half-Indian!"

Jack laughed admiringly. "Not so bad, considering my years! Of course, if I'd been a light-heeled young master buck—"

"Not so young! I am close to nineteen." He sang it. "Close to nineteen! Close to nineteen!

—Come, Eagle Feather, let us bathe! Come, Young Thunder!"

There was a rock and falling water and a deep, wide, glassy, dark and icy pool. They stripped themselves of their no great weight of clothing, Ruy Valdez who was Pylades or Jonathan, and Miles Darling, who was Orestes or David. Poised upon the beak of the rock, fifteen feet above the pool, the March sun struck them whitely. Behind were giant hemlocks, huge leafless oaks and lindens, above a sky of March blue, but smoky, grayed by the fire. Motionless, the three bodies, arms raised and pointed, hung an instant in the light, then dived. "Ugh!" said Young Thunder, and shook the chill water from head and shoulders.

They swam, they played, while Jack Archard watched them from the bank. Once he said, "If all England and all Spain could ha' been friends like that?"

And again, "Young Thunder is a good one! He'll play third fiddle or bring up the rear, denying Indian nature—and all because he and Golden Hawk marched together as little fellows from the very day we left the sea."

Golden Hawk was singing in the water. He sang about King Arthur. Eagle Feather, answering, sang about the Cid. The staves of the two ballads countered, marched together, separated, warred, met again and made an even tide of song.

"That Ruy Valdez, that Eagle Feather," said

Jack Archard, "he's a limber bit of steel, too!"

At night the red fire lines ran up a mountain to which the wind had borne a brand. They made a great red figure above the trees, like a writing in the sky. The Indians observed it, but no more; they were sitting and lying about their own fire, just pleasantly fatigued with the day's hunting and carrying in the game, relaxed, smoking, joking and bantering after their own fashion. Meshawa was too great a chief to be here upon this piece of half-frolic, half-earnest work. But in his place sat Long Scar, his adopted brother. Long Scar had his especial log, the best of the venison, the best of the pipes, and the directing or the checking word. Most of the hunters were young men or men well this side the middle years. Long Scar, however, had seen forty-and-odd spring hunting parties. Long Scar had been a young brave beside Meshawa when Croatans still lived where the sea ran around the land. Others here could remember well enough the long wandering from Croatan Island to these mountains, the moons and moons, the incidents and accidents and losses of the way. But Long Scar had been man while they were youths, man and great brave, and near Meshawa, who had been nearest Canacaught. Long Scar had the whole legend. Long Scar had stepped upon the ships that brought the white Croatans. He had seen the ships open their white wings and fly away, that had never flown back. Long Scar remembered, too, old war with the

Usherees, when, each year, as a matter of course, the young men took the warpath. "Ah, I weary," said Long Scar, "of peace that is like a too-old, too-tame woman! We had some good warring coming from the sea to the mountains. But now, none but Cherokees around us, and peace for so many moons of blossoms one cannot count them!"

"Ha!" said the young men, listening. "We wish that all the Cherokees would widen again toward the sea! Widen into the Algonquin country and make it Cherokee! Or let the Algonquins try to break into Cherokee country. Then would be war again and war paint and war dance and warpath and scalp-taking! Ha! there is too broad a belt of Neither-land between Cherokee-Iroquois and dogs of Algonquins! But Meshawa likes peace."

Long Scar was loyal to his brother. "Ha! he is right. Canacaught gave him and White Chief wisdom to drink. Canacaught was wiser than any medicine man that has ever been! They say when he was young man you saw air between earth and his feet when he walked. He taught Meshawa and Meshawa taught White Chief. No! Cherokee country is at peace, growing wise, growing rich in corn and lodges and new things to make, learning Great Spirit ways. All the same," said Long Scar, raising the pipe to his lips, "it is exciting and not unpleasant to hear the war whoop!"

The fire lines upon the face of the high mountain crossed and interlaced and made a vast red

cipher. Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather—Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez—watched it from the rock above the bathing pool. The night was mild, almost windless, filled with the tang of burning wood and covered with a fine veil of smoke that softened and dimmed the great March stars. Golden Hawk lay at length upon the sloping rock. Eagle Feather stretched himself beside him. With them it was "Miles"—"Ruy"; "Ruy"—"Miles."

"What does it make? There is 'M' and 'R.'"

"There is a 'V.'"

"Virginia?"

They looked up at the high mountain. "The M and the R are trying to reach the V."

Several pines on fire sent out a web of smoke that hid the mountain and the fiery letters. Said Ruy Valdez, "What are they doing to-night in Hispaniola and in Valladolid? I dreamed last night of señoritas walking to church!"

Hispaniola was but four years behind him. Seven years ago he had been in Spain for a year. He had not known the Indians of the continent, but he had known the Indians of the Indies. They were in bondage; white men endangered them, not they white men. But from the wreck of the *Santa Clara* other Indians! Another fate for Ruy Miguel, son of *el capitan* Miguel Vicente Valdez! But fifteen is fifteen and nineteen is nineteen, and the years between are years of a change that seems long, so rich and so full,

so sharply tasted, so many-colored and toned are they always, Spain or the Indies or Cherokee land! By now Cherokee country and home were one. Moreover, Ruy Valdez had been a lonely lad that other side of fifteen, lonely, rarely treated with a perfect kindness, knowing coldness from his mother the lady, and at times harshness from his father the captain, and a certain bitter training from Fray Francisco, who wanted him for the church, Ruy himself wanting rather to wander and note the earth, to sit under great trees with his eyes upon the sea, and at times furtively to make and write down verses.—Croatan Town had become a sweeter home to him than the Indies or than Spain. If it were Spanish duty to hate the English, then he was no longer Spanish! He loved Dame Cis and Master Guest, and with emphasis Doctor Peregrine Wren. As for Miles Darling—brother, comrade, friend!

"King Arthur was a mighty king,
He and his Table Round,
He had a sword, Excalibur,
His Queen was namèd Guinevere—"

sang Golden Hawk.

The smoke wreath shifted and there sprang again upon the mountain side the fiery marks. "They've changed, but there're still the letters in the middle and a scroll around.—Ruy, what like is a Queen?"

"I never saw one.—A very beautiful woman, all

pearls and balass rubies, crowned, and her smile is the honey of the world, and her frown its sharp sword. Something like that. My Queen would be like that."

"Spain's Queen?"

"Oh, aye, undoubtedly! But my Queen, wherever she was."

"There was a knight, Sir Lancelot,
King Arthur's truest man—

Look!" broke off Golden Hawk.

All the lines had met. There was one flame upon the mountain. The wind sighed in the hemlocks and the leafless trees; the water plunging downward to the pool has its steady rushing voice. Golden Hawk turned upon his back. "There's a great star up there. Two."

"They're Castor and Pollux. They're friendly to mariners."

"Yes.—Well, one is you, and one is I."

"Agreed. Pollux is the largest to look at, but sailors say they are even in might."

"That's as it should be. I know another thing about them, Eagle Feather. Doctor told me. They're old half-gods, and they die for each other. They share death so that it won't lie heavy on either."

"Well, you saved my life."

"I wouldn't have had you die for a great deal, Ruy! It was Young Thunder, too, who saved

you." For Golden Hawk worshiped through life a white star above all stars but a few, and that was Justice. "But it isn't a question of debts between you and me," said Miles, and went to another as white a star.

"No!"

They lay upon the rock above the water and watched the two stars and the flame upon the mountain.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GRAPE-VINE SWING

THE nine-year-old Philippa was to be May Queen. Miles had cried, "Virginia, Mother!" But Dame Cis, after speaking with Christopher, had shaken her head. "No, a little maid, Miles!" So it was Philippa, who went about in a child's dream of contentment. "But you'll dress me, Virginia, in all the bright feathers and all the bright flowers?"

The dance and the game were upper, lighter, finer winds in the nostrils of all Indians. Every season had its great dance, and lesser festivals ran in and out between the huge garlands. Share! Share! The English, through necessity and policy and, with not a few, inclination, took some part —a small part, or at least the part of applauding audience—in the play of the Croatans. There was no holding aloof from the life of the forest. It was not possible, it was not desirable. Besides, they stood in the sixteenth century, and behind them was Merry England, an England of games and plays and festivals, old, familiar, sweet. Share! Share! Let them not die out of the life of the generation that had never touched soil of

England. Share them with the Indian brother, the Indian sister. Guest and Wren were wise men. "Blend! Make a life that is one, of which every soul shall say 'ours'! Blend in so many things that those which we must exclude are not counted against us. Moreover, they have saved us. Let us in turn give all that they will take of a richer world.—So this whole tribe may soften, aye, become as it were Christian and wise, and be a leaven for this world!—England that comes at last, when our dust is blown away, may find an easier path and a folk that will be friends."

So they spoke, not knowing that three years after his departure from Virginia—that war with Spain, as to which Ruy Valdez had been badly informed, well over and the great Armada sunk—John White and an English ship had come to Roanoke and found naught there but one tree with CROATAN cut upon it. Found naught and no sign, and having his own troubles sailed at last away, believing all dead.

They kept certain English holidays, and taught those who knew them not English dances, English sports. And now it was May.

Virginia Dare was not far from seventeen. The Croatans called her Bright Dawn. Slender, just short of tall, she was a brown girl, brown hair, brown eyes, wide-browed, of an odd and characteristic beauty. She brooded, she was shy, and then again wildly, clearly sure of herself, rapid of speech and much to the point. She might move

for a long time as in a dream, and then emerge in an action so decisive, so planned and well planned, that there was amazement in it. Something breathed about her of legend or a tale of faery. "Bright Dawn! Bright Dawn! Bright Dawn!" called Dancing Leaf, and they were off to the grape-vine swings.

That had been earlier, when Bright Dawn had fourteen, fifteen, summers. But now Dancing Leaf was squaw of Long Arm, Star-at-eve was hoeing the corn of Many Deer, Shining Water was listening to Quick Foot's songs. "Bright Dawn and Golden Hawk should marry," said Meshawa to Guest. "Old enough!"

"Yes, they are old enough," agreed Christopher, "according to your way of thinking, Meshawa, and according also to our day in Europe. But I do not know!" He thought of his own love life, slowly growing, laid at Marian's feet when he was well into his twenties, not prospering there, slowly altering, coming into secure and happy haven with Cecily when he was thirty and she twenty-seven. "There are minds and hearts that do not take kindly to hurrying. Dame Cis and I would not have them marry until they love. They have been brought up like brother and sister. That could not be helped, but I think it delays. I have talked to Golden Hawk and told him what we hope."

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'Why, I'd die for Virginia, of course!

I'd be her knight against every one. And I like to look at her—she's Virginia! But, Father, I don't want to marry—not yet awhile!'" Christopher smiled. "Brother and friend—but by no means lover! Not yet."

"Eagle Feather—what about him?"

Christopher mused. "That lad's born under the sign of the minstrel. He dreams.—He is really in Spain or the Indies as well as in Cherokee land."

"Whom will he marry?"

"I do not know. There are girl slips coming up around us now."

"I think he likes Bright Dawn very well," said Meshawa.

"No!"

"Watch him!" counseled Red Chief.

Christopher walked from Meshawa's lodge through Croatan Town to the stone house. All around was May, May of the forest, of the garden patches, of the soft, languid, beauteous light and air. There were no streets in an Indian town, but a maze of paths. The grass between these was green, the trees were growing green. A butterfly crossed his path, he heard the hum of bees. And no Indian village at peace lacked continuing sound of cheerful voices. Christopher, passing, spoke to many, and many to him,—short, friendly speech. Neither color in this place now dreamed of doing without the other. Croatan Town, holding White Chief and his people, held, as it were,

a University, a Cathedral. All other Cherokee villages said, "Town of the Croatans" with a certain inflection and depth of voice. Croatan Town knew this, knew it very well. It had a shield with a rich device; its helm was brighter, higher plumed than any.

The Englishman came to his own quarter. Here seven or eight log houses and the stone house were set about a small green. Behind each dwelling ran a garden patch, joining at last the broad, sunny hill front where, all for all, the English planted their corn. In front, about the doors, were planted flowers and vines. In the tree before the hall a mocking bird was singing. He met Dame Cis without.

"Virginia and Philippa are gone with the others for flowers to make their garlands, and Humphrey with Tom and Will and John Goode to bring in the Maypole."

She leaned against him. "Oh, Christopher, spring brings all things back! What do they do at home, forgetting us, thinking, 'Long since they are dead'?"

"This is home, too, Cis."

"Yes, it is so now. Oh, yes, it is dear home!"

They smiled into each other's eyes, loving each other and their children and friends, and at last this town and this country. Seventeen years are seventeen years. The exquisite song of the bird above them rippled through their hearts. Spring stirred them; they stood consciously for a moment

in the Spring above the earthly one,—the infinite, enduring, celestial Spring. Her hand sought his, he bent toward her; they kissed, all in the green shade of a mighty tree in Cherokee land.

Presently he said, "I have been talking with Meshawa, and it was about Virginia and Miles and Ruy."

A bowshot from the village, in the forest, Virginia Dare broke white dogwood boughs and blooming plum and branches of the Judas tree. Philippa and Bess Viccars, Lettice Goode, Anne and Win-Grace Barecombe and the half-Indian Damaris Archard left their elder to the trees while they gathered wakerobin and May-apple, wild pinks and violets, and the earliest rosy honeysuckle. Presently there were armfuls; they had a great basket which, when it was heaped, they set in an inch-deep, clear stream that purled along under wild fruit trees. This done, they resorted to a monster of a wild grapevine that, clinging to this tree and that one, made of itself almost a grove. Certain loops formed admirable, strong swings. The children sat or stood in these; they swung one another and swung themselves. They shrieked with glee, they laughed and called. "No more work out of you!" quoth Virginia, and, laying her flowering branches where the thin water overran the stems, she herself moved through the wood to another great vine. It ran to the top of a tulip tree; its long, shaggy, flexible stems rose, drooped, threw themselves from bough to bough

in loops and festoons. Some of these swung on high, others descended close to the earth of ferns and moss and violets. Into one of these loops stepped Virginia Dare and stood, her hands clasping the stem on either side, swaying gently in the perfumed air.

The girl dreamed, moving slowly with the moving vine. Spring was coming up her way also. All manner of wistful, confused perceptions, happy too, suffused with May and song, but not altogether happy, not without lines of pain and effort, held her, sat in her eyes and in the exquisite, half-mournful, half-rapturous curves of her lips. She swung herself slowly, lightly, and all her life seemed to go to a dim music, not well understood. Out—in; out—in; out—in. The green trees were budding, the blue sky showed between! Prayer and praise,—it was a day for prayer and praise. Life was good and wise and sorrowful and sweet. Life was deep and strong and somehow splendid, though the splendor hid behind veils of falling blossoms, dropping leaves. Out—in; out—in. In May, of all months the dearest, why were there tears in the eyes, and longings, and arms lifted for they knew not what to the blue sky? Out—in; out—in.—Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather—Eagle Feather and Golden Hawk.

The young men and boys brought the Maypole home and set it up with cheerful shouts and snatches of song in the middle of the green before the stone house and the log houses. The women

and the girls garlanded it, and it stood there through a moonlight night.

Dawn broke, clear, colorless, solemn, then in rose and gold. Virginia Dare, Susan with her, stole from the stone house to wash her face in May Day dew. For that they chose to go to the river bank where the grass grew greenly and there were bluebells. All the river was swathed with mist, an opal shot with rose. Virginia, kneeling, gathered the drops from the grass and bathed her face.

"Why don't you, Susan?"

"It's to make yourself fair to a lover, child! My lover's dead."

"Looking out from where he is, won't he like to see you do it?"

Susan stood with rounded blue eyes. "I never thought of that." Kneeling, she washed her face. "Sylvester, it is for you, though you be in Heaven!"

Virginia stood up. "Why should I be doing it?" She laughed a little. "Maybe I have one in Heaven—"

Susan, now also standing, regarded her. "The blessed dew has already made you fairer, Jinny! —Miles Darling's the one Heaven's sent down."

"Miles!"

"He's careless now, thinking only of this woodland and the ways of it, and the young men about him, Indian and Spaniard, and I never liked Spaniards!" said Susan. "He's for the bow and the arrow and the deer and his arm around a

young man's neck—same as Robin Hood! But it can't last! He'll have to go the way of all of us or almost all of us. Some day soon he'll turn around very quick, Jinny, and there you'll be, standing in the path—"

"No!"

"Oh," said Susan, "your body may be somewhere else, with Dame Cis or going to Sunday evensong with Mistress Eunice! But all the same, you'll be standing in his path. And he'll put out his arms and say, 'Not till this day did I ever see you clear, Virginia Dare!' "

"You are dreaming!" said Virginia sharply. "I am Miles' sister!"

She turned and took the path from the river. "No, you are not!" quoth Susan following. "And Master and Mistress's and everybody's heart is set on it! You be sure your beautiful dead mother and Dame Cis planned it when you were lying in cradle, and Miles, that was the best to look on ever and the truly best inside, was running up and down the shore, against the sea that never will we look on again!—And as for Ruy Valdez," said Susan, "Damaris Archard is too young yet, but she's the one for him!"

The May dew must indeed have had a faery touch, for Virginia, looking over her shoulder, was more beautiful this morning, Susan thought, than that Eleanor Dare who was remembered for beauty! Beautiful as the blue flowers that grew by the river, a sheaf of which lay upon her arm.

Yet all that she would say was, "It isn't a way you should be talking, Susan!" And with that her feet moved so quickly that the older, heavier woman was left behind.

CHAPTER XV

THE MAYPOLE

THE Maypole was tall and from it swung long garlands. A bird perched atop might have viewed the green, the stone house, the log cabins, the Indian huts, some of them made in a scrambling fashion after that new pattern the English showed, —the English who had axes and cut down the thickest trees—but the most still of bowed saplings covered with woven twigs and mats; viewed all these dwellings irregularly placed, the trees including the mighty council tree, the gardens, the brown fields beyond where presently corn would wave, the river, the Clear, the Swift, the Runner, and then all around, the forest, the forest omnipresent, the forest climbing in mountains to touch the sky. The bird, singing for joy in the sun, and the blue and the springtime, might have watched the folk gathering to the holiday. Came the English, with little left of English dress; came the Croatans, men in festival paint, women in their best, children much in Nature's dress. And all smiled or laughed, all were gay.

This was the white Croatans' holiday. They

were the arrangers, and to an extent the participants. But they drew in the red Croatans and especially the youths and maidens. And all Croatan Town was there to watch. Meshawa came to sit by Guest. The lesser chiefs took near-by place. Canacaught, dying, had named for medicine man of the Croatans a strange and solitary Indian, who used little of mummery but fell at times into trance or ecstasy, after which he spoke to his people of a world in the breast and behind the forehead. Good friend of the English, he never tried to depreciate the transcendent skill of Make Well—Doctor Peregrine Wren—their medicine man. He was friend of Make Well and of Prophet, for Prophet was the name they gave to Matthew Fullwood. Croatan Town was blessed in companionships, not rivalries. Metakela nodded to Wren's beckoning, and placed himself near him on the edge of the green. But Peregrine could not be stationary; a dark, quick, scholarly man, both imaginative and active and endowed with a gay good humor, it was he who had drawn the card for to-day and trained the actors and was master of the revels. It was "Doctor!" here, and "Doctor!" there.

The May Queen's chair—and that was another white wonder, a true chair—the May Queen's chair was set under a canopy of flowering branches. And now all were gathered, and the May Queen was ready to pace forth from the Hall, and the music began.

For there was music. Griffith Llewellyn, flying to the fort that woeful night in the City of Raleigh, had taken under his arm his good fiddle. All these years he treasured it, and on occasions played it, an old Welshman now, with his white hair flying. He would leave it, he said, when he died, to Miles Darling. It was not so hard to make a drum, and years ago the English had made several, large and small. Will Gosling was drummer, and for drummer-boy there was young Ned Barecombe. And they had made flutes and fifes. So now they played "The Battle of Otterbourne", and "As It Befell" and "The Dark-eyed Shepherdess."

Philippa May Queen was crowned with flowers, and from the wreath hung an old, treasured thing, and that was a long and wide veil of lace that had been Eleanor Dare's, that was spread above the cradle of Virginia Dare, that was snatched up with the babe by Peregrine Wren, that woeful night. It was Virginia's, and she had taken it from her box upon the shelf and brought it as a matter of course to deck the small May Queen, gasping with delight. Behind Philippa streamed the children, red and white, of Croatan Town, all somehow decked, all bearing flowers. And now the Queen, marshaled by Make Well, took her seat and the court its place, and the music played, and all the red folk listened with deep approval, and the sun shone bright on Croatan Town!

Peregrine Wren carried a long stick with a tuft of leaves for baton. He was here, he was there,

directing, the great English Medicine Man! He had a programme,—English sports, English dances, an English masque. Wrestling: Will Gosling and Edward Barecombe. Quarterstick: Tom Darnel and John Goode. Running and leaping: half the young men, red and white alike. Juggling: Tom Darnel. Archery: ten of the best, red and white, Miles Darling leading the white, Young Thunder the red. A part song: all the best singers. Oratory: and here Long Scar had been chosen by the Croatans and he himself by the English, and the subject was the Goodness of Nature and Who created Nature to the Croatans, white and red. Then came a short masque. Peregrine had spent time over this. It would rehearse the story of the English coming over the sea to Virginia—and of Roanoke Island and the Usherees all hostile—and of the Blessed Island of the Croatans. It would portray tragedy, loss, treachery of Osocon—the departure of so many for Heaven—Canacaught's vision, Meshawa's rescue, and the migration of the Croatans, and with them the English, Croatans now too. The long migration—moon after moon and more dangers than moons—and at last, on a summer evening a river and a long hill and beyond, over the hilltops, the mountains. And a great tree—the very Council Tree—and on the topmost branch a hawk, golden in the last sunlight. And again a vision of Canacaught, and "It is home, Croatans!"

History! History must be taught the young;

they must begin their legends. There were verses to go with the masque. Wren had written them. They made a recitative, a narration, that the dumb show illustrated. A great many took part in the masque, both English and Indian. Long Scar played Meshawa, for Meshawa himself was dressed as Canacaught. No lesser man than Red Chief must play that part! So close, so extreme, was the interest in this masque, that almost it might be said to be too successful! A strange solemnity, a sense of all things and happenings suspended, held so in a thronged stillness forever, grave but not unsweet, fell upon participants and spectators. Did not Spring itself so swiftly reappear that to a certain kind of vision Spring might be said to be always here?

This feeling carried over, when the masque was done, into the dance. After the dance the feast, and the end of May Day revel. Dreamy, dreamy, pacing, gliding, hurrying here, there, and again here, there, all in a great rhythm—and the May—and the steadfast caroling of birds. At last there was catching at the many long streamers of leaves and flowers depending from the pole, and a circling and circling counterwise, two moving wheels. The wheels were young men and maidens, and on went the choir of birds, and Griffith Llewellyn fiddled and fiddled.

Virginia Dare held a streamer of the white fringe tree. It was in her lifted hands as had been the grapevine swing the day before. She

was dressed in very fine doeskin with some working of beads, her beautiful, rippling, sun-shot brown hair hung in two great braids. She moved lightly, but with the sureness of the river, the bird, the stars in heaven. Ruy Valdez came toward her, in his hands pink honeysuckle. She looked at him and smiled, clouded around with the white fringe tree. Ruy saw the Beauty that rises from all beauties, and the Queen beneath whose eyes are all queens. He saw Aphrodite, he saw Mary, Mother of God. At once he loved, fully and greatly. The fire had been smoldering for a year. Now it sprang into white flame, altar flame, flame from the heart of the sun.

"Ruy, what is it?"

"Virginia—Virginia Dare!"

They passed in the twisting about the Maypole, those behind them urging them on. Virginia felt a dizziness; it was as though one had struck her, and yet she did not hate the one who struck nor was she unhappy, but she wished to weep, and a certain strange significance was coming into all things and Croatan Town and the world. But her feet danced on, and she held the great, fragrant, silvery wreath of the bloom of the fringe tree. Miles Darling came toward her, in his hands cedar and dogwood. She had gathered the dogwood and the cedar and herself twisted that wreath. But Miles did not know it, nor would he have thought of it if he had. She or Philippa. What did it matter? He smiled; he was laughing

in pure, high-hearted glee. He hummed as he danced. "The Maypole—the Maypole—around the Maypole—as in Old England!" A splendor of beauty was upon him.

He came toward Virginia—Miles with whom she had played when she was a babe, been brought up with. He was laughing and humming; he hardly looked at her. "The Maypole—the Maypole. As it is in Old England.—Hey, Virginia! —Look out, Damaris!—Now, Young Thunder!"

He was gone by. Yet he stood before her—lifted above the earth. He stood within her. "Not Ruy, not Ruy.—Miles!"

CHAPTER XVI

WAR

CHEROKEE LAND lay in summer when there first came a creeping talk of the Shawnees. Big and little, there were five Cherokee villages in this immediate part of the world,—that is within fifteen, twenty, miles of one another. There were five Councils, but under the spur of a word like this running like fire through the forest, there sprang an Over Council, to which each of the five sent the bravest and the wiliest. Shawnee! Restless, numerous nation, northward Algonquins! Pressers into other men's hunting grounds!

Long Scar cried, "What did I tell you at the Fire Hunt? Peace never lasts forever!"

The Big Council held itself under the Council Tree in Croatan Town. The almost as large village, a day's journey toward the rising sun, the small village, half as far, in the eye of the south wind, the village down the river, the village nearest the debatable territory across which, if they came, would creep and steal and fly and run the Shawnees,—all these sent their men in Council dress, feathered, painted, with rich belts of wampum and the peace pipes of their villages.

Croatan Town was aware of its importance. And yet, icy, icy, went around the word Shawnees! And yet the young men felt, each one, oh, taller and larger, at once enormously sober and as if they had drunk much mead. It was a feeling that exalted, even elated. The children of Croatan Town were mightily excited. Among the older men, the chiefs, the responsible ones, feeling varied. As for the women, there, too, the feeling varied. There was excitement, but almost wholly the excitement was painful. And yet, to all, something was happening, and who knows what hidden joy Experience experiences in experiencing new rhythms, or old rhythms after sweet absence come again?

Of course Cherokee Land would defend its life and its ground! Shawnees might go back to their own mountains and river,—a great river of which wandering Cherokees sometimes brought tidings. What was the tally of war men in the five towns? And beyond the five—some distance beyond—were other Cherokee towns. The five were between these and the Shawnee cloud. If it were not a great cloud the five could manage it alone; if there threatened a tempest, if the whole sky grew black, then all Cherokees, all the *Tsalaki,* must combine.

Find out! Let so and so and so and so go forth for news, these in that direction, those in the other. Without sound, without visibility. Send hares and birds back with news to the towns. And in the

towns get ready to pursue the Warpath! For the Cherokees would not let the Shawnees approach their towns; would meet them days away, in bands large or small; defeat them, scatter them, take scalps and return in triumph—triumph—triumph! The word seemed to mount and ring through the branches of the Council Tree over Croatan Town, to sound with the river and be thrown against the mountains and back again. Triumph, triumph, triumph! Always the *Tsalaki* would triumph!

The great men returned to the four villages. Meshawa the Croatan was made Chief of Chiefs.

War! Long Scar spoke of the War Dance.

But Meshawa said, "Wait! Wait till the news-bringing deer and birds bring the news. The Shawnees that are idle roamers caring little for their homes may be but roaming now. Having come this way they may go that, or turn upon their tracks."

Long Scar thought, "He has been too much with white men. War is dying in their hearts."

The "deer" and "birds" went from the five villages. Almost naked, without paint, stealing, flying, and at need becoming "serpent" and creeping over the floor of the forest, they went afar for the Shawnees themselves were yet afar. Days passed, then came back a bird at eve to Croatan Town. "Tempest! They are coming like their river, like the trees upon their mountains!"

War! The drums throbbed! The War Dance!

"Miles, must you? Oh, Christopher, it is falling many a league, down Time!"

"I will dance, Mother. But I shall not howl nor paint myself!"

"He is Golden Hawk," said Christopher. "He cannot hold himself apart. But, Miles Darling, keep in your heart, 'English knight and Christian!' "

Virginia crossed the doorway. "Saint George," she said, and was gone.

"That is not bad," spoke Christopher, moved. "Saint George for Merry England!"

"Ruy and I will try not to be savages," said Miles, and kissed Dame Cis.

He and Ruy danced, young men, warriors, with the red young men. The War Dance lasted a night through. A black and scarlet night, a fierce and loud night. The next day was farewell day.

Meshawa and Long Scar would lead from Croatan Town seven-score warriors. To great White Chief, Christopher Guest, was given Croatan Town to keep safe. With him stayed old Indian men and some who were not old but elderly, and a few who were in their prime. So he would have strong persons to give help, if some arm of the tempest swept this way! It was not likely, but in a world of happenings now and then an unlikely thing happened. In Croatan Town were all women and children, red and white. And there were so many white men. But a dozen of the white took the warpath with the red. These had bows and ar-

rows, tomahawks and knives, the one color with the other. But the English-Croatans had beside four or five very long knives called swords, and three of those fearful, demon weapons that they named harquebus. A dozen white men, and now after seventeen years all the English in Cherokee Land were no more than fifty.

Farewell day—farewell day! And the four other towns had the same, and now swift men were gone to the Cherokee villages beyond, in large Cherokee Land. All the *Tsalaki* would rise like bees in the tree when you disturbed them, and the Shawnees would rue it!

Farewell—the going Croatans, the staying Croatans. Red, White. Farewell!

"Where is Virginia?" asked Miles Darling.

"Virginia! Virginia! Come—Miles and Ruy are going!"

Small Humphrey raised his voice. "Ruy has told her good-by. He kissed her hands and her skirt and her feet. She's gone; she ran down to the river."

"I'll find her," quoth Miles. "Take my bow, Phil."

The river ran so near that all Croatan Town slept to its lullaby. Miles plunged down the bank. There the trees grew thickly, and beyond these, in summer, stretched a brown ribbon of sand and pebble. Once upon this, before you ran the clear green water and rose the forest of the further side, while behind stood close-touching young willows

and maples and sycamores and a long tangle of blackberry vines, and no one might see at all if you lay upon the sand with a stone for a pillow and wept.

Virginia Dare had wept, but now weeping was over. Through life she rarely wept, could taste woe without salt tears. She lay as quiet as the stone, and her eyes were closed. Miles thought at first that she was asleep.

To be as the Miles of all but one minute ago, he must cry, "Virginia! Get up! I'm going!" But in one minute there stole over all earth a difference. He stood and gazed, his arm against the willows that he had parted.

She lay her length, with one arm outstretched over the sand. Her face was in three-quarter to him, her eyes closed. Her face, very still now, was no longer the face of a child or a slip of a girl. There was something profound—oh, so deep!—sorrow surely, but it might be joy. Her breast rose and fell; deep shadow and broken light seemed at odds, or perhaps in agreement, in her face. All suddenly she became magical to Miles Darling. It was as though she lay within an oval of light. It penetrated her; it was her and she was the light. Magic! It crept toward him, it bathed him. He dropped his face in his hands, but then must look again. Magic, Magic! His eyes swam in tears, his heart seemed too large for his breast. He had never even known that she was beautiful.

She opened her eyes, they widened. With her

hand pressed against the river sand, she raised herself. Now she was on her knees, now she stood up, and always in that ring of Magic. "Are you going—are you going, Miles, now?"

"Yes—"

"Good-by."

"Good-by."

When he broke through the willows it was to say, "Ha, Virginia! Aren't you coming to see us march away?" But now he did not care for that. Apparently Magic turned all things around, and you saw that they had other faces.

Brother and sister might be expected to embrace, to kiss each other good-by—when there was Great Danger clapping his wings in the sky.

But if you suddenly saw, in a blinding light, that you were not brother and sister, what then?

"What then?" was settled by a beating of the willows and the cry of two or three. "Golden Hawk, they're waiting!" Jack Archard's face appeared, "Meshawa says 'Come!' "

Miles did not touch her, nor she Miles. "Good-by. I'm coming back—I'm coming back!"

"Oh, be sure, be sure—Come back!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE BRUSH HEAP

CROATAN TOWN had sentinels, day and night, men watching close to the lodges and cabins, and men watching at a remove from these. Being now so few a people, sentinels could not be numerous, but they made up by watchfulness. Very especially the river was watched. Yet the messengers, sent back by Meshawa, said that the Shawnees were all in front, only beginning to enter the debatable land.

"Red folk all know how to pour through the forest in small bands, and they love to flank their foe."

"It's not likely that Shawnee will get by Cherokee."

"No, it's not likely."

Still the sentries were set. And all wandering from the town was forbidden. Hunters only went, and they went warily and never very far. White Chief and all with him, red and white, men and women, kept alert. And always they thought, "How fares it now with the warriors who have gone?"

But the summer days dropped away, fra-

grant, colored, still, summer days, summer nights.

Wandering from the town could not mean the breadth of the river—sentry above, sentry below—where went on fishing. Nor could it mean the long maize fields, where now the great ears must be gathered for the folk's daily meal. Here, too, on the crest of the hill, a red man kept watch. Nor could it mean the close edge of the forest, whence firewood was brought. But it meant all wandering for pleasure or to see the world.

Tom Darnel did not like that. So when to-day he went fishing, he edged farther and farther up the river. The best pools were above. He was not going too far. Any moment, if he shouted, Blackbird the old warrior, who was watching, would hear. Tom fished, but for some reason caught nothing. Just here, the corn fields came down to the water.

He hardly knew why, but at last he wound line of fiber with hook of bone around his pole and started back home through the corn rather than by the river bank. The maize stood high, and a zephyr rustled the myriad blades. The sky was blue, with white clouds streaming over it. When he came nearly to the top of the hill, he took advantage of an outcropping of stone to lift himself above the maize world and overlook the winding river and the perpetual forest. The air to-day hung extraordinarily clear and the mountains came close, dressed all in a deep purple and blue. He turned face toward where, far away, at this very

moment, might be terrible, silent or yelling, War.

"I am glad I was drawn to stay!" thought Tom. "A cold wind blows every time I hear the word 'scalp.' 'T isn't Christian!"

The acres of corn rustled. In the August light the blades shone bright green, the tassels golden, the silk at the top of the big ears murrey-colored. Nations of insects droned or chirped unceasingly. The breeze made a jagged, rushing sound, and as for the big white clouds, "Ships, galleons," thought Tom Darnel. "Might as well see them in the sky, for we'll never see them on the ocean! —What's that rustling the corn?"

The movement of tassel, stalk and blade, a small agitation in the sea of steady rhythmic swaying was occurring between him and the houses of Croatan, plainly visible at the foot of the long hill. It was coming toward him and out of it he presently heard a woman's voice. "That's Shining Water." Another answered. "That's Bright Dawn."

The maize was so high that nothing could be seen until, mounting the steeper face of the hill, Bright Dawn and Shining Water came into a row that led, a narrow aisle, full to the boulder upon which he lay. When they were quite near he spoke in his queer, lazy voice. "Don't go out of bounds!"

The two girls started, then laughed. "Tom, we thought you were a Shawnee! You mustn't go out of bounds, either. But that boulder is in bounds. So we're coming to it!"

"Yes, it's in bounds, so I'm lying on it." Tom's dried walnut face broke into a grin. "There isn't any one—never was any one—so obedient to orders as Tom Darnel. There's a view from here. Want a hand up?"

Virginia mounted beside him, after her Shining Water. All three, sitting upon the warm brown rock, stared over the waving corn and the forest. The corn went over the hilltop and down the slope until it touched the forest. "I am tired of never going any farther!" said Virginia. "I wish we might go farther. Down to the river, into the forest, on and on until we could see—until we could see—*them!*"

"I have been down to the river," said Tom. "Fishing. It's all clear there. But I couldn't see —*them!*"

Shining Water spoke in her soft guttural. "Yon's a hurt bird."

They looked along a lane in the corn that ran down the side of the hill, away from Croatan Town, ran, in short, out of bounds. A bird with a broken wing painfully struggled over the brown clods. Virginia rose, swung herself down from the boulder and moved noiselessly toward the bird. However, it felt her coming, and ignorant of succor, friend now as foe, with a frightful effort it fluttered well ahead. She followed. The slope of the hill increased. Bird and Bright Dawn sank from sight in the green sea. Tom stepped from the boulder and moved in the same direction.

Shining Water had behind her ages of Indian discipline. Obey war rules—obey! But this out of bounds was so little, little out of bounds!

So all three, the fluttering bird before them, insensibly descended the hill. Now the great mass of earth stood between them and Croatan Town. The wounded bird was a bluebird, beautiful with a dimly rosy breast and all the rest of its plumage azure. In terror and unhappiness, it persisted in pursuing a brown wilderness where it must die.

The corn stopped, the forest began. "You can't help the wildered thing!" spoke Tom Darnel. "Better turn back now, Mistress Virginia!"

Here at the edge of the forest rose a pile of brushwood, heaped for burning. The bluebird fluttered into this. "Now, perhaps!" said Virginia and approached the mound. The other two were a few feet behind her. She stopped short, half-turned her head, stood a moment, then said clearly, in Cherokee. "No, the bird we were following is gone now." Turning, she rejoined Tom and Shining Water. "We might as well go home." Then, speaking low, in English. "Enemy! Go as if we didn't know it."

All three were trained enough. They began to saunter uphill, toward that heaven rock they had quitted, there above them, gray against August blue. But coolness was for naught, though in the long run coolness never goes for naught. The six Shawnees who had crouched behind that brush sent ahead neither arrow nor war cry. They came

forth as one, as a huge, swift beast of the forest might have come. The three knew that they were pursued, "Run! Run!"

It was useless. The Shawnees, picked men, young hunters and warriors, overtook, fast, fast! Tom Darnel shouted. The great boulder was so little way above them—the top of the hill—the sight of Croatan! Where was Old Eagle who walked the hill top as sentry, who often lay upon or behind the boulder?

They felt the breath of the Shawnees. Red hands were upon them. Shout again, cry out the three of them, though that meant an immediate rough gagging with strips torn from their own clothing. Knife and tomahawk threatened Tom Darnel. He shut his eyes. "Oh, God, save a sinner!" There occurred a confabulation. Shawnee tongue was enough like Cherokee tongue to make out that it would be a sin and shame to kill—yet awhile—any one of that fabulous English or White breed. "No! Take prisoner—show!"

It seemed that there was a larger band somewhere, or perhaps a number of scouting parties with a rendezvous. The six who had crept to the brush heap turned at once toward the shelter of the forest, putting their prisoners before them. "Go! Go!" they said. To drag back, to become dead weight,—that would mean present death! The three looked over shoulder, despairingly, upon the hill where only the corn waved. Their eyes

pierced it, they saw home; and no one knowing, no one knowing about them!

"Oh, Father! Mother!" cried the heart of Virginia. "Oh, Miles, far away or maybe dead!" And the heart of Shining Water cried for her town and her hut and her lover. And the heart of Tom Darnel cried, "Oh, Matthew, Matthew Fullwood! I laughed at religion! But I wish God would send you and the others over the hill-top!"

Above the boulder at the top of the hill, unseen to them and to their captors, slowly and cautiously lifted a head, the head of Old Eagle. At once it ducked. Old Eagle became Old Serpent and upon his belly or upon hands and knees crawled through the corn down to Croatan Town.

But the forest closed over Virginia Dare and Shining Water and Tom Darnel.

The strongest and best of Croatan Town tracked them a distance. Then there cut across the trail a shallow, tranquil stream, affluent of the river. "Here they stepped into the water.—Nothing on the farther side.—No, they went up it as in nature they would! How far, only God knoweth! Somewhere will be a larger band."

"And if we are drawn away from town?"

"We mustn't be. No, not though ten hearts break!"

They went back. In the night they heard the Shawnees around them. A stockade had been built. Two hours before dawn came attack

against this. Repelled, it was not renewed. These Shawnees, a mere foray by way of mountain and stream into foeman's land, could not afford siege or daylight attack. Less than fifty, when all the fingers were gathered into the hand, they also were acting upon an understanding. Having spied out the land and the lay of three villages, they were ready to wind back the way they had come to the great warpath and the Shawnee strength. They had three trophies. A Cherokee girl, and a woman and a man of those strange, pale, wise folk, of whom there was everywhere rumor. So they departed.

But in Croatan Town there was weeping of women and children, and men had faces set and sorrowful.

Matthew Fullwood came to comfort Dame Cis. "They will not slay the maiden."

"Oh, she were happier if they slew her, slew her quickly!"

"We have no right to say that. Her happiness is with herself or with God."

"Oh, Eleanor! Eleanor!" cried Dame Cis. "Dost remember, where thou art, when thou camest up the water steps at Plymouth, and thy babe under thy heart, and thy dear husband with thee, and thy father all-honored, and no less than Walter Raleigh to take thee by the hand and wish thee all joy in that Virginia to which thou wert going—"

"She is safe, and her child is safe."

"I cannot feel it so—not yet! Oh, Virginia Dare is alone and lonely to-night!"

"There are Shining Water and Tom."

"Yes, yes. I don't wish to be selfish. But—"

"Listen, Dame Cis," said old Matthew. "In many ways you know Virginia Dare—many and good ways—but there are one or two ways that I have watched, and maybe you were not quite free to do it there. I have heard Doctor say that she has a good mind, a very good mind, and I believe it. But what I have to say is that light from the spirit beats through upon that maid. Her soul is awake, and now and then the spirit comes like a sunrise upon the soul. That being the case, she will grieve, aye, sorrow and be lonely, Dame Cis, for the soul leans toward earth too. But also there will ever be a rainbow in her sky, and deep, deep within she will many a time find safety, security and joy. And her good will increase, not lessen. And in that heaven, Dame Cis, she will learn to see and touch Croatan Town and all our souls."

"Oh, Matthew, yes!" said Dame Cis. "But now let me weep awhile."

"I would not keep you from it," said the old man earnestly. "But when tears are spent, that will come to you, for it is the truth."

CHAPTER XVIII

CAPTIVITY

"I BROUGHT it on Tom and Shining Water," thought Virginia Dare. "I am eighteen. I know what is love and death. I have myself and God who made me. Teach me, O God, be with me, O Christ! Teach *us!*—Be with *us!*"

It was the third night and they were far from Croatan Town. They were out, on this side, of Cherokee Land. They had traveled two days with the large band, but now were not with it. Nor were they approaching the long strip of country where Shawnees and Cherokees were bloodily warring. Tom Darnel had dreamed that somehow, coming into battle land, they might hear one night Long Scar and his young men whooping—and here through the trees would come Meshawa, Golden Hawk, Eagle Feather and Young Thunder!

But no! Never would it be so! Eight Shawnees were told off to bear the three away, into the high mountains, over the great mountains, to the wide river and a town there. Shawnee town, Shawnee land. News must go back and demand for more war men, for war with the Cherokees

was going to be long war. These many then, and the prisoners.

They were high among the mountains, going away from where warred Meshawa and Golden Hawk. Tom walked with a sunken heart.

Shining Water had her grief. To go to a strange place, among enemy folk,—long would it be, long, long before it was like home! Long before a Shawnee wigwam and a Shawnee brave would have the seeming of Quick Foot and Quick Foot's wigwam!

Night, and rest upon a mountain top. There were no bonds, escape having now no outer form at all.

"I brought it on Tom and Shining Water," thought Virginia Dare. "I am eighteen. I am English, not Indian. I am woman, not girl any longer! O God, let us not perish, nor turn our lives back!"

There was grass upon the mountain top, and a small, clear space. They had come here at sunset, and it was a view of grandeur. Now that was hidden, but the unutterable forest, falling from this crest on all sides and forever, sighed and murmured like its brother the sea. The jeweled sky had never a cloud. Weary enough, Virginia Dare had slept. But now she was awake, and she sat up and sat very still, with her arms about her knees. It was near to dawn. There in the east had pushed up the slenderest moon. Close to it hung the great planet, the morning star. The

mountain top was strewed with broken rock, and the fire had been made in a kind of natural fireplace. There were yet red embers. Around lay the Shawnees. This was peopleless land and they set no formal watch. But make any definite stir, try to pass the ring that they formed—the eight hunters and war men—and up would bound this one, that one.

Near her lay Shining Water asleep, and Tom Darnel slept.

The moon and great Venus rose higher. The east whitened. Virginia Dare sat and thought what she should do. The east faintly colored. Now there were greens and golds and purples and carmine. The world of mountains became visible. Some stretched in long lines, clean against the sky, like the vastest ramparts. Others had peaky shapes. All their hollows and all their slopes were forest, forest, forest. In the hollows, upon the lower slopes, clung white vapor. A long trail of it showed where flowed a river. There was the smell of dawn and of a forest as great as an ocean, and below this crest an innumerable, sleepy cheeping of birds. Cool was the great gulf of air, cool and still. Within it, against earth and sky, head and breast above the mountains, against the fair east, filling and bathed by the east, Virginia Dare saw a giant figure, and it was Miles Darling. It stood, eternal, vast, among the heavens. "Wait, wait!" it seemed to say. "Wait, Virginia!"

It vanished. There was the world of moun-

tains, the gulf of purple air, the green and gold and purple and carmine of the morning sky, the now silver white, faintening moon and planet.

A Shawnee stirred, another. They woke, and Tom Darnel and Shining Water.

There was no unkindness, beyond the huge one of forcing them away, of carrying them into exile. Shining Water was young and comely. When passions were up Indians could war upon women as upon men. Hatchet and knife and torture stake for woman as for man! But it was not their custom. After a little the Cherokee girl would come into a chief's wigwam, presently would be neither better nor worse off than a Shawnee woman. That is to say, from the red point of view, very well off! Already the chief of these eight, a strong young man named Big Panther, saw Shining Water that she was fair.

But around the white maiden ran a barrier of magic and difference. How long it would stand —arrows and palisade—involved, of course, many factors, white and red. There was one thing about Indians. They were not without self-restraint and not without reverence. If anything became *okee,* if anything became sacred—.

They had a notion that Tom Darnel might be a medicine man, moved thereto by his clothes, an image which he wore upon a string around his neck, the way he had taken a thorn from his foot, a great thorn going through moccasin and all, and had blown upon it to make it well.

As for Tom Darnel and Virginia Dare—it was not as though these two were yesterday from England, surprised and taken ere they knew this savage land and life. They knew it very well. The girl had known no other, save and except the life and ways of that handful of England thrown within it. Shawnee and Cherokee had no more intrinsic unlikeness than had York and Devon. It was not that there was strangeness, but division, separation, the woe of captivity.

They knew the life and the Indian mind. But Croatan—a well-dispositioned tribe to begin with—had been under white influence, and that of a right not a wrong kind, for eighteen years. Not a little was altered, softened. The Shawnees were ruder, wilder. Virginia Dare might have felt terror. But it was not terror that came to her, only waves of sorrow.

The sun pushed a red cap above a long, purple, mountain wall. The breeze stirred the grass upon this crest. A Shawnee, kneeling, laid sticks across and blew the embers into flame. It was summer, but very high here and chill with mist and dew. There was venison for breakfast, and a little way through the bushes a spring all clear and cold. In England over the sea it was a bold age, hardy and manful. Walter Raleigh had gathered for his 1587 venture persons of sense and courage. Croatan Town had given right training—Canacaught and Meshawa, no less than Christopher

Guest and Cecily his wife and Peregrine Wren and others. Danger and trouble, relief and gladness shared; long years and many invisible fingers had been at work. Tom Darnel at fifty was not Tom Darnel of thirty, except in a kind of daredevil wit and inventiveness, modifying itself but staying with him. And Virginia Dare had been taught to think and feel and act, but never to complain.

The sun cleared the mountains and all the mist rose and vanished. Breakfast over, march, march! was the order. When you crossed one mountain range, another rose before you. You came down through oak, chestnut and hickory, maple, beech and linden, pine and hemlock, to a vale narrow as a knife and a flowing stream where the deer drank. You rested here with a grunt or a sigh of "Very good!" then climbed a second wave like the first, to see a third before you and that crossed, a fourth. Always a trough of richest wood and stream; always an opposing slope with gray or emerald crest against sky of blue or sky of storm. Sometimes they found a pass, the stream flowing through, crags overhanging. They kept with the stream, through the pass, needling so that especial earth wave. They met a vast manner of four-footed, creeping and flying life, but only twice small parties of Indians, and both of these friendly. No Indian villages, for here were too high mountains, and indeterminate country, and a vast solitude. At sunset they halted; at sunrise waked and traveled

on; at midday rested. Time was of small account. Plenty to eat, cold springs to drink from, sliding, crystal brooks into which to plunge and bathe, at times to fish, drawing forth shining trout. Follow the trail at a pretty steady so much a day, and it would bring you at last to the desired river, the desired town. Up and down, up and down. Oak, chestnut and hickory, maple, ash and birch and beech and linden, pine and hemlock, narrow vale, leaping stream, sunshine, cloud, morning, midday, night.

"Six days—six nights."

"If they could see you, Mistress Virginia,—well, if they could, Master Guest and Dame Cis and everybody in Croatan Town would be proud of you! I'm proud of you myself," said Tom Darnel. His face, lean and long, wrinkled and lined and odd, broke into his queer smile. "Who would ever have thought that you and me would be the ones to carry christened ways over mountain? You and Miles used to say, 'Let's go to the high mountains!' "

"Miles! Yes—and I said so, too. Don't call me 'Mistress' Virginia, Tom! You and I are the only England now and must be wise. So, when he comes, he will find us living, and not crazed, nor white-haired."

"I've been thinking for myself," quoth Tom, "that I'd become Darnel, Great Conjuror. If you can't be prophet—and I never could prophesy—juggling and a little medicine are your best turn!

Everything we know and they don't is wizardry to them."

A doubtful smile hovered over his companion's countenance. "If you could be forever doing those tricks you played May Day—"

"I can," answered Tom. "Not forever, but just often enough. I know a lot of those things and I can devise others, for I've got," said Tom stoutly, "a brain. And it isn't for nothing that I was a player once—sometime before I was walking in Taunton and saw it chalked up that Sir Walter Raleigh was going to Virginia!"

"Doctor has taught us all a little medicine."

"Aye, I've observed him. In short, we've all taught one another. I've learned a lot, Virginia, since that night the Roanoke miscreants came against us in the City of Raleigh by the sea! A lot. I'm a better man, for one thing," said Tom, and looked kindly at Virginia Dare. "I was wild in England—a wild one and a wastrel! But that's all changed now. I'll take care of ye, Virginia, the best I can!"

"I know you will. And I of you, Tom. And both of us of Shining Water, and Shining Water of us two, and God's around us all. O God, help me!" said Virginia Dare and put her arms over her head.

They came to a dark ravine and went through it slowly, over stones and rotted logs and hemlock roots, beside a brawling stream. Laurel grew tall and thick. Overhead and all around the mat-

ted forest, and the clear, cold, loud stream piercing it like a sword, blue and flashing. Six of the Shawnees were in front, two in the rear, for that was the way they traveled. Big Panther turned his head and spoke to Shining Water. She answered, they went on, one in the steps of the other, parting the laurels. The stream leaped in waterfalls, slept in black pools.

"If one day I had to, I should drown myself and think it no wrong!" said Virginia.

"Don't ye do that!" answered Tom sharply.

"Then help to keep me from being as Shining Water!"

They cleared the gorge and saw before them a sun-lighted valley, wider than any they had yet passed. Mountains stood around, but a river neither wide nor narrow flowed through level meadows, where in small open dales between magnificent trees grew rich grass and summer flowers. The Shawnees began to speak of Shawnee land. With pride they pointed it to their captives. Better than Cherokee land. Shawnees the only folk! Shawnees the real men, the principal men!

The vale lay uninhabited. They camped this night in a small place like a paradise. The next day they climbed a long mountain and from the height saw between them and the sunset sky a wider valley, a larger village, corn fields and the smoke of an Indian village. Big Panther's face, turned upon Shining Water, grew smiling and almost tender. "Home! My home, down there!"

They built their fire and ate their venison and lay down to sleep under the great stars. Night, and "Miles! Miles! Miles! Oh, Father and Mother!"

The east paled, the great planet hung like a lamp. Tom Darnel crept over to Virginia, where she sat beneath a pine tree, her arms about her knees, her eyes upon the way they had come. Mountains in waves, many waves, a long while and a lost path! Say that Croatan Town did not lay in ashes, say that Golden Hawk was not slain with Meshawa and Long Scar and Eagle Feather and Young Thunder and all the rest. Say that—But the Shawnee trail was hidden, and this was another and a far land, and there were many Shawnee villages, up and down, they said, a vast river, and now all Shawnees had only death for men coming out of Cherokee land. Despair!

Tom sat down beside her. They spoke in whispers, Big Panther and his men sleeping around them. Shining Water, too, slept. "Virginia, I've been thinking. What you mean, poor maid, is that you don't want to come into any Shawnee wigwam as wife—not if it is the wigwam of the Chief of Chiefs! You want to wait for some one back on our own river, or die maid."

"Yes, yes, Tom!"

"Well," said Tom, "I thought and thought till my head got tired. Then I stopped thinking and rested. Maybe I went to sleep. Anyhow, after a while I turned upon my side and my eyes opened,

and away off was a little figure of stars, and I lay with my eyes upon it. And then, before you could say Queen Bess! an idea formed. I saw it like a picture," whispered Tom, "only it was clearer and brighter than any real thing. It came like that and went like that. But it's the thing! It can be done! It will work, because that's what I saw. I saw it working."

"What is it?"

The gold star burned; below it the east reddened. The morning wind began to blow, the birds to cheep. "I wouldn't bother to put it into operation now. No! 'tis no need till we come to this village that I suppose is to be home, and get the greetings over. I reckon 'twas my talk yesterday set me thinking of it, and that a conjuror man can make them afraid to touch him. Well, 'tis the same with a mad person."

"Go mad!"

"Feign going mad. Not a wild madness, of course. I've seen it done many a time when I was a player," said Tom. "Enough, but not too much. That's your cue! I fancy you'd do it mighty well, for you've got what they call 'artist' in you—a deal of it—and you know as well as I that they won't touch a mad person to harm them. They're *okee*. They honor them. They're just as like as not to make a great Medicine Dance around them. And a certain kind of madness they treat as Prophecy. And whoever is a prophet or prophetess is saved.—Whatever you say

about it," said Tom, "it was Vision Vouchsafed!"

"I see. I'll think of that. Thank you, Tom!"

The pine sent down odor of the wilderness. The mist began to thin, the birds to sing more strongly, the east decked itself in scarlet and gold. Big Panther stirred, sat up; other dark figures moved. The day began.

CHAPTER XIX

RETURN FROM WAR

ALL the forest was colored when Cherokees knew that they were victor and Shawnees agreed among themselves, or among those of their invasion who were left, that Cherokees, *aided by their white magicians,* had a present invincibility. The yellow and red leaves, in their multitudes like the sands of the sea, were raining down when all the Shawnees who could go turned and hastened back to Shawnee land. So many did not go, unless their ghosts went! Many were the scalps the Cherokees had taken. In their triumph, when they waxed poetic, they claimed that they were as many as the falling leaves, but that was not true or near the truth. However, they were many. The red and yellow leaves lay thick upon the ground when the Cherokees crossed again the debatable country. When they saw their own mountains, hills and streams, the trees were standing naked, save for a few dimly colored rags.

Long Scar was gone to the Hunting Ground above the crimson west, where went at last all brave and loyal *Tsalaki.* Many Cherokees from the five towns, and from other towns which had

at last been drawn in, had gone with Long Scar. Not a few from Croatan Town were gone. Five of the white Croatans were gone. These called their Happy Hunting Ground Heaven. But Meshawa lived, and Young Thunder and Eagle Feather and Golden Hawk. Once Meshawa had been in extremest danger, but Golden Hawk, precipitating himself from a crag, darting as it were from the sky, had saved him.

The bands for the various towns parted company at the village nearest the scene of war. Here, before they separated, took place the great Scalp Dance, the final pow-wow and mighty feast. It all consumed days, bright ones and ones filled with the late autumn rain. At last it was over and the parting shout was raised.

The floor of the forest lay russet and wet. The trees stood naked in a thin, cold, blue air, filled with faint sunshine. Meshawa and his young men turned toward the river,—the Clear, the Swift, the Runner—and the town of the Croatans. Vast flocks of birds were going south. Winter was at hand.

They came over the mountain and saw their own river, and Croatan Town, light smoke like blue bird feathers rising from the lodges and the log cabins and the stone house. Miles Darling began to shout and sing.

"Home we're coming—
We're coming home!"

Home knew that they were coming. The band for the town below had passed through Croatan Town two days before, had rested, feasted and gone on. The Croatans, red and white, had the tale of those who had gone to the Happy Hunting Grounds or Heaven, and they had news of Meshawa's lasting valor and wisdom, and of the manner in which Golden Hawk had saved Meshawa's life. Home was watching, keen-eyed, for them; watching big of heart. A horn was blown. Coming—coming!

The Croatans who had gone to war and the Croatans who had stayed by their town flowed together.

"Ha, welcome!"

"Ha, welcome!"

For so many days would be ceremonious wailing, women of the fallen wailing night and morning. This among the red. The white also would mourn, though not in just the manner. But many were returned, and the Shawnees had run home, not marched home in triumph! War was over. A great medicine dance and a great feast looked round the corner of time.

Croatan Town resounded on a gray, late November day. The pines stood green against a gray sky, but all the other trees were bare. The sky stood level gray, the air hung level, moveless. But the warm fires leaped and sang, the river murmured, and red tongues and white tongues, too, were loosened.

"O Golden Hawk! O Eagle Feather! O Miles and Ruy!"

"You've grown. You are men!"

That was twelve-year-old Humphrey. He and Philippa moved about, the two together, like little, eager flames. All stood in the hall of the stone house.

"Mother and Father! Six months almost. It's good to see this house again. And as for Ruy, he's just as much your son as I am!"

"Yes, Ruy! Oh, both of you, we are glad!"

"Ha, Doctor! Ha, Mistress Eunice! Well, Susan!"

"Where is Virginia?"

It was Ruy who had spoken, but the question was also in Miles's eyes.

"Miles, there is bad news here. Sit down, both of you—"

Darkness seemed to come into the hall. The fire grew remote and without cheer.

At last: "We'll go after her, Ruy and Young Thunder and I."

He went to the door. "It's snowing."

They could not go after Virginia Dare, over high mountains, in the winter time, a trackless way and the snow beginning. They saw that. They were like Indians now, wise in Indian ways, knowing the ways of water, earth and air, the ways of forest food, knowing times and seasons. Not till spring! She must wait, in a village of the Shawnees, with Shining Water and Tom Darnel. How

far? Where are you to-day? Virginia! Virginia! Virginia!

Hours afterwards, the long, restless, lighted and shadowed day spent, the household gone to rest, Miles and Ruy gone, Peregrine Wren gone, Christopher and Cecily Guest still sat by the embers of the hall fire. They sat side by side, their hands together. The logs parted and made red hollows and fantastic scenery. Here it glowed, here was ash and ebony. Outside the wind moaned and the snow fell. The snow would not be deep in late November, but it was snow. It struck cold; mountain winter was walking into Croatan Town.—Embers of a fire like Martinmas fires in Old Hall.

"They will go—Miles will go."

"Yes, Cis."

"No one knows where she is. It is like hunting the Grail. All his life, maybe! But his life is like to be short.—Oh, my son, my son!"

Heavy sobs shook her, leaning against him. He held her close. "Yes, Cis.—Yes, Cis. Like the Grail. But no man or woman must stop any from hunting that. It's his knighthood. His and Ruy's. The other lad mustn't be forgotten."

"No, no! Christopher, so strange is life, and has so many heartaches!"

"Aye, so strange. And has so much goodness and greatness. And at last, Cis, gladness. Trust! —Trust them and us and all."

The hearth glowed, as though it thought suddenly of a Hearth. They sat long, with many thoughts and memories. And outside the snow fell and the great mountains were covered with cloud.

CHAPTER XX

MILES DARLING AND RUY VALDEZ

MILES DARLING and Ruy Valdez, in a canoe up the river, under High Rocks, held a map between them, studying it. The map was made of fine, dressed skin, and was not so large but it could be folded and stowed in a pouch. The English made an ink of a certain berry, and for quills were all the birds in the world. The Indians used paint. Golden Hawk, Eagle Feather and Young Thunder all had worked on this map, and more than that Meshawa had worked, and beside that there had wrought a medicine man of an old northern Cherokee town, guest in Croatan Town; and lastly a man of another town, a Shawnee, captured long ago when he was young, adopted into the tribe and now as good a Cherokee as another. It was a map of Shawnee country, that was a large country with wandering borders. There ran a long, long river, winding, doubling, like the Snake of all the snakes. Many mountains were between Croatan Town and that river. Shawnees had plenty of towns. Here was a town and here was a town. The river crossed the map in blue. Lesser rivers emptied into it. Large

towns were marked with a red wigwam, small towns had a red arrow head. There were said to be three "peace" towns, like Echota of the Cherokees, and each of these had a drawing of a pipe. The mountains were marked in brown and orange. The long, ancient warpath of the Shawnees crossed the map, irregular, traveling from point to point, in black. As the river had its affluents, so into the great main path struck from every Shawnee region lesser paths. It was a very uncertain thing how large was Shawnee country. If it were anything like Cherokee it might be comparable, in respect of size, with England. Towns and rivers, paths and mountains might be here where they were marked, or they might be slightly somewhere else. They were somewhere, that was certain. The map did give, roughly, indications. For the rest, wit, wit! Wit, persistence and courage.

"Start from the boulder—start from the brush heap," said Ruy.

The other nodded. "Then Beaver Run, and where they found the Shawnee arrows."

They put up the map and took their paddles. Above them maple, sycamore, willow, hazel and alder, matted and leaning toward the cold, green water, stood leafless, but the buds were swelling. The river ran with its springtime loud voice and fullness. There was dream in the air, and dream in the blue sky, and the birds were returning. Go now—they were going now!

"What I mean," said Miles, "is to slip away."

Ruy nodded. "Best, after all. And three. Three can do things that four cannot. Four is a company, but three can act as one man. If we want a company a thousand were too few."

Miles's paddle dipped. "My mind."

"When? To-morrow?"

"To-morrow is Susan's birthday."

"The next day, then?"

"Yes, the next."

The paddles dipped and rose, the water drops caught the sun. They went in silence, until in the minutest cove they drew their canoe under hazels and fastened it there, took up their string of fish and stepped upon land. Beyond the hazels a monster sycamore lifted its trunk, spread vast, crooked, pale arms. The sun made it gleaming. Far overhead, across March blue, crows flew and cawed. Underfoot were dry leaves and a fine, green moss.

Ruy stopped. "Let us stand or sit here and speak together a little. It seems to me, before we leave Croatan Town, we should understand. It seems to me it would be fairer, each to other."

"Yes?" answered Miles. "What's coming, Eagle Feather?" He laid deliberately down the string of fish and rested with his back against the sycamore.

"I've watched you," said Ruy. "At one time I watched you with all my eyes, every minute of the time. I could not believe that you would not—

did not. But I could not see that you did. I could hardly believe that, it was so strange! But you did not, I think. And then, from the very first, as soon as we went against the Shawnees, I knew that you did. I know it now. But I do not know—"

"Yes?"

"I do not know if you know that I—"

"If I know that you love Virginia? Yes, I know it."

Miles Darling stood against the sycamore, Ruy Valdez between two young birches. He was dark and slender, the Spanish young man, dark-eyed, a dark, silken line upon his upper lip. He had a high forehead, a slender, fine jaw and chin, not at all lacking in strength, a slightly hooked nose. Forest life had bronzed him as it had bronzed Miles, standing against the sycamore. They were silent while the forest shook and the crows went cawing overhead.

Said Eagle Feather: "I don't believe you and I met first and only that snowy night that I stumbled to your fire! I like you too well, I've known you too long, you flow too strongly through me and I through you for that. I don't know when nor how, but we're old together. And something like this, it seems to me, has happened and happened! Oh, old woe and longing, and never able—. It has happened and happened. Now, if we find Virginia Dare—"

"Yes."

"That one she loves, he's the crowned man. You will try and I will try."

"Yes."

"I shall try hard. But if yours is the crown, I will serve you, Golden Hawk!"

"If it is the other way around, Eagle Feather, I never mean to slay you, Eagle Feather!"

"It is all understood then," said Ruy. "King or no king, no one can keep us from loving the Queen."

"Loving holily, no!" said Miles Darling, and took up his fish. "It's noon. Let us go on."

Susan's birthday was kept. Sore they missed Virginia Dare, but the stone house held holiday and there were gifts of pottery and woven things. The spring day passed and the spring night. Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez ate breakfast and when all had risen from table said they would go fish.

There was a pause. Something hung in the air. All knew it and none spoke of it. Only said Dame Cis, "Give me a kiss, Miles, Miles, before you go!"

He took her in his arms. "A long kiss, Mother, and a great hug! Whatever happens in this world still we love each other."

"Forever and forever—that!"

Ruy passed through the door. She called him back. "Ruy!—Ruy, too!"

Christopher waited outside. "Susan is weeping, there by the tree."

Miles went to her. Guest spoke to Ruy Valdez. "You and he are both my sons, though neither is the son of my body. Do well and be brothers still!"

"I shall try, Father!"

"You will both do well, for it is in you to do it. And so, God bless you!"

So they went fishing, over the corn hill, and at the great boulder atop they found Young Thunder, who was going too.

And Dame Cis found, in the Bible taken with a score of other books from the City of Raleigh, a bit of paper with Miles's farewell. Miles and Ruy's. "It's their *devoir,*" quoth Peregrine Wren. "The age is modern, and we are sunken in American forest. But knighthood knows its own ways across and out of time and space!"

"Pray, pray for them!" said Eunice Cooper. "Pray for them night and day! Miles and Ruy and Virginia, aye, and Tom Darnel and Shining Water!"

That was in the first bell note of spring. Through long spring and long summer and long autumn Croatan Town heard naught of those fishermen. But when winter came and in England the Yule bells were ringing, Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather and Young Thunder returned to Croatan Town. None was with them; they had not found whom they were seeking, scarce had heard of whom they were seeking. They had been across Cherokee land into Shawnee land, and their

adventures, their perils and escapes were more than could be told, sitting by Meshawa's fire, sitting by the fire in the stone house. Fishing and hunting must wait through the winter, but when the sky turned March blue again they would go. They knew more now than last spring. This year they might find whom they were seeking.

When the sky took March blue they went. When the Old Woman Who Snows and her brother the North Wind were again at work, the three returned once more to the town of the Croatans; again the three only. Golden Hawk had an arrow scar, Eagle Feather a knife scar. In the spring-time they departed. "But we lose too much time, O folk that are dear to us, in coming back when it snows! This time, unless she comes with us, we shall find a lodge on the edge of Cherokee land and there lie out the moons when we cannot hunt." So they did not come back the third winter.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PLACE OF ARROWS

THE spur of the mountain, a living green, fulfilled with July, lay under thick blue sky and ponderable sunshine. The sun stood directly overhead, the air flowed even and slow, heat was perceptible even in the most shadowy brake. The bird world, the four-footed world, scanted their activities; it seemed to make no difference to the insect world. "'Siesta! Siesta!'" remarked Ruy Valdez to a locust upon a bough. "You say 'Siesta' eternally, but never take it!"

Turning upon his side, he regarded Miles Darling where he lay asleep. Young Thunder was the hunter to-day and had not yet returned with their venison. They were lying perdue here—had lain here since yesterday—because at the foot of the spur ran a warpath, and Shawnees were passing along it. A Creek war, a small one. Silent foot, keen ear, had found that out for them. The war party seemed all passed and far enough away, but they would give it all the time needed, here in this deep violet hollow dug by water long ago.

Golden Hawk slept with his arm outstretched,

the relaxed hand all but touching the brown rivulet that ran through their place of hiding. Eagle Feather regarded him with wakeful dark eyes. "Is he Indian now or European? And I the same? I had the start of him. I was fifteen when the ship sank and drowned my father. He was three when they sailed from England. English ways and fifty English in Croatan Town can not save it forever. Less than fifty in a world of forest and red men. It may temper it forever, but not save. He is twenty-six and I am twenty-six. For six years England drifts away and forest and red men increase. He begins to look Indian and I likewise. It is not that we go outwardly like them. If I crawled yonder and looked into the still water, I should see it now in the face and eyes. O God, so we be men!"

Very great trees climbed the sides and stood around the rim of the bowl of earth. The sky caught in their branches had the seeming of dreamy blue flowers. The voice of the cicada and the small voice of the stream and no others. Eagle Feather stared into the green world just varied by the blue flowers. "And this woman we're hunting for. She's like a picture to me now in that cathedral that I remember.—Six years.—We love the picture. A girl at May Day. She is not that now, if she lives at all. I can say, 'If Virginia Dare lives at all,'—and still the picture hangs clear, high up with the light upon it, and the incense rising to it, and the music rolling through and

around it. A picture! If a bird came and sang with a human voice and all the sense of truth, 'She died—died long ago. These rumors that still at long times you hear are of another. It is not she. She died,' we should stand, and everything would be empty for an hour, and then—there would swing clear the picture, higher, higher still, forever there with sweet music and gold and violet light! But the hollowness, the vacancy in the days and nights—we should have to charm that away. 'Golden Hawk, what now, for we have no purpose?' 'Eagle Feather, a purpose is necessary. Go back, first, to Croatan Town, and then, God knows! Maybe one will drop from the sky.' "

Ruy Valdez turned upon his side. Still the forest, so still and so still. "What is the end of it all? Our little white bones here in the wilderness; and what does it matter what will be in this land, long after, long, long after? Spain will flow over it—even, though it is unlikely, England may flow over it—but Miles Darling and Virginia Dare and I shall be gone. She is gone already maybe. It is probably so. There is the picture. We have that. Maybe it and we will come alive again. 'Do you remember,' we shall say, 'Do you remember once a great forest?' After a quiet night, alive again. And so much changed, and some things not changed."

He regarded aslant the blue flowers. "Or go on living, without a night, whether our bodies lie here

or not. Go on within. Living, anyhow, living with pictures that gradually come alive."

An eagle passed overhead. A bird nearer at hand began a sudden liquid song. Miles Darling opened his eyes. "Young Thunder?"

"He is coming now."

Golden Hawk sat up. "I dreamed—it was a strange dream! I dreamed that she was dead. They had laid her on a bier and we were all walking around her, you and I and Young Thunder, Father and Mother and the others, around and around; Meshawa, too—all Croatan Town—around and around. All the Cherokees going with us, and not them only, but the Shawnees and the Creeks and the Catawbas and the Tuscaroras—all red men, and the birds and the beasts and the forest. The sea, too, and the world. Around and around her, lying there like a branch of laurel. Then a great bird flew up and over our heads and away, and we turned after the bird. It was a strange dream!"

He rose and stood, splendid in form and face as young Hermes. "There's the bird singing, and there's the eagle flying, and I hear Young Thunder!"

Young Thunder came through the bushes, down the bowl side with their meat. "Creeks all gone. Travel in the morning."

The next day they halted upon a bare bluff of rock and earth lifted sheer from a noisy stream. The rock rose in tiers, naked, high and gleaming.

They climbed to a wide ledge three hundred feet above the dark water. "Many men here before," said Golden Hawk. "They made arrowheads. Old place."

Stooping, he picked up one, two and three. "Flawed. Something happened here, too. They left in a hurry, long ago. It is the place that Creek meant."

They had been climbing, but they were not breathed. Scarcely more so than would have been three panthers. Light of foot and sure of hand, supple, sinewy, strong, they had been trained by the forest with her dangers and her respites as she trained her other creatures. They sat down, knees drawn toward chins, and overlooked a green and tumbled ocean. All about them lay bits of flint, some merely loosened from the seam, others showing chipping. Arrowheads, hatchet heads, knives, some perfect, others flawed in the making or begun and never finished. Ancient quarry, ancient manufactory, but long deserted, long become forbidden, occult, owned by the spirits of things. Though his nation had not drawn the line around it, Young Thunder would not of himself have come here. But the white Cherokees were bold.

They had eaten below, by the water, bathed and eaten, then had climbed here, up to Old-Place-Where-They-Made-Arrows, for the night. It was Golden Hawk's insistence. "Maybe the spirits up there upon the eagle shelf can give us news!

Anyhow, I'm going, Young Thunder. But you could wait here for us—"

But Young Thunder would go where went Golden Hawk. Never was any one so bold and yet so wary as Golden Hawk! Now they sat upon the ledge, among old shards and shreds of ancient work, and looked down upon the dark water and out over the rolling green, turning gold, turning violet, and an almost round moon swinging like a bubble over against the sun. Oh, still it was! But Young Thunder foreboded night, since that belonged to the spirits of things. Personally, he would have wished to keep the moon from climbing and the sun from walking down to his Great House where he pulled the skins over his head and slept and slept, while moon and stars and clouds and spirits did what they pleased. But since that could not be, he kept a little smile upon his lips and sat impassive.

Said Golden Hawk, "We will gather the best arrowheads." He faced east and a little south. "Croatan Town. Can you see Croatan Town, Ruy? I can."

"Yes," Ruy answered, then after a moment. "You haven't said anything about it for a long time."

"No. It is so far away. Why speak?" He picked up a flint. "This one was almost finished and a good one. Why did they drop it and go away in a hurry?"

He turned the arrowhead over in his hand, then

sat like a statue brooding over Croatan that they had not seen now for two years. Croatan—Croatan—Croatan!

They sat so still, under the lessening sun and the strengthening moon, that they might seem to a sudden, swiftly passing aircraft of a far future stone guardians of that stony place. Nearer, it would be seen that they had slight clothing of dressed skins, that there were differences—one darker, one with a golden beard. They sat so still, with the forest ease and alertness. They had, all of them, scars.

The sun went down but there was left light from a pale blue and gold and green sky. Now they heard the beginning wind, the night breeze murmuring afar and near. Young Thunder thought, "They come back—they are talking—all who ever made arrowheads here." The evening star began to shine, large and bright.

"Talk of what we are going to do," said Golden Hawk suddenly. "We have heard nothing for a very long time."

"Was it ever of her that we heard? I think that it may have been all along, all the time, some Indian Queen. Spaniards would say they were used to that in the Indies. Always great talk of a distant, fabulous, high man or woman! Come to it, and here was always some brown man or woman, a very, very little taller than their fellows!"

"Maybe so. And Virginia Dare is dead."

"Here, there—Here, there! Five years of it.

Village and village and village. Once we crept, covered with wounds, to the edge of one, and lay among sumach and blackberry till we saw the prophetess they bragged of go by, and it was an Indian woman. And once we were tied to the stake, and the Queen released us, but she was Indian. A white woman afar, and when we come to 'afar,' always again a white woman afar! Now I think 'afar' means over the Death River."

"I think so, too. They killed her soon, or she died because she was sick for home. She and Tom Darnel."

He stared again at the moon. "I heard a voice last night. It said, just as clear, 'Is this a red man or a white man? Which is Young Thunder and which is Golden Hawk?' "

"Shall we go back to Croatan Town?"

"What do you say, Eagle Feather?"

"I say it is far likeliest that she is dead. Six years since she was taken—and we may search another six and still hear, 'In such a town, by such a river, there is a white woman who is their prophetess.' Hear but never see; or, seeing, find it all a mistake!"

"Round and round and round her bier.—Round and round and round and round the Maypole, one May Day."

Ruy Valdez moved. "Ah, if it is so plain still! It is still so plain with me too.—It is a picture only in the sense that you and I and Young Thunder there are also pictures."

"Virginia Dare—Bright Dawn! Bright Dawn —Virginia Dare!"

"Then—"

"We will make a path to that Shawnee town they say there is no trail to, for all the braves go and come by water or by wind."

"They say there are few towns farther than that."

"I would go by those mountains we called Bright Stone."

"Where was the great waterfall. I remember."

Miles Darling took up a flint. Moon gave light enough. "This is a good one. We had better fill pouches with them in the morning. Who made them, I wonder? They never saw Christians sitting here, nor wondered about ships and England. I wonder—I wonder!"

Below their white ledge an owl began a long, slow hooting. "Tu-whoo! Tu-whoo! Tu-whoo!"

A whippoorwill began to call: "Whippoorwill! Whippoorwill! Whippoorwill!"

Down by the water the frogs were croaking. They croaked loudly. "Greek! Greek! Greek!" Very distant, there screamed a mountain cat. Bats flew overhead.

"They are gathering—they are gathering. The spirits of the arrow-makers are gathering!" thought Young Thunder.

CHAPTER XXII

THE PROPHETESS

THE prophetess of the Shawnee town on the point of land gazed from her hut upon veils of snow. Her fire of red pine knots burned gay and clear, so dry and rich and quickly burning that only a little white smoke rose and drifted about the hut and finally found the opening in the roof. She stood at the door and looked out. She had a true door and a true hut, great marvels to that region. It was not the region to which she had first come. She had been made to travel from town to town, but at last in this far place had befallen so great and marked an omen that the folk could only cry, "It is her home! She must stay!" Four years she had stayed. It was seven since she had followed a wounded bird from a great rock in a cornfield to a brush heap at the edge of the forest. She never saw a broken-winged, fluttering bird but she smelled again the corn tassels and had a vision of home.

The snow fell straight, in large white flakes, obscuring the hills and the river. She stood watching, between the snow and the fire. She was dressed in very fine doe skins, fringed and beaded,

and her long hair hung loose, in waves of brown crossed with gold. The Shawnees called her Dawn-of-the-High-Day and Bright Dawn and White Prophetess and The Great Spirit's Niece, and, what she best liked them to say, Virginia Dare.

The snow and the red fire and the hut were all clean. It was not a northern land; the snow might fall through the day and night and whiten the earth, but to-morrow the sun would take his broom and sweep it away. A broom of straw put together and bound to a stick rested in a corner. She took it and swept the floor, already clean. With foot and hand she pushed into a half-circle about the fire certain blocks of wood, then over against these placed one for herself, higher than the others and shaped with a rude back and arms. She moved slowly, with pauses, for she was dreaming to-day. Snow made her like this, snow and leaping, singing flame. When she had placed the seats she went to a shelf of bark and took from it three great strings of blue wampum and put them on, one after the other. There was a circlet made for her head. She set this on too, and it became her at once, under it flowing those long wavy locks the color of the chestnut with threads the color of the love vine. She had no mirror. In summer, the much water of this region could any time give back face and form, but this was winter.

On the bark shelf stood a basket of woven grass. Out of this she took and bore to the chair on whose

broad arm she laid it a piece of quartz as large as a large apple. It was very pure, unflawed, a veritable crystal. In it, lying there, danced the fire, red and blue and amber flame. This done, she went again to the door. There was no wind to blow the snow. It fell straight, straight, in large white flakes. Through it, under the bare trees, she saw Tom Darnel coming. She watched the small, bent figure, in its mantle of raccoon skins and its tall headdress. Medicine man—medicine man and prophetess.

The snow—if one climbed by the snow to the snow cloud and through the cloud, what then? Would there be blue sky and sun—leagues and leagues of it—and if one went on, days and days and days, would one come to Heaven? But there would be the forest of the stars. She watched the branches every cloudless night. Where were the trails? One might die of loneliness in that forest. Only the shooting stars crossed some part of it. But only a part, after which they perished. Where was Heaven—where was Heaven? *In the heart and the mind and the will!* In Croatan Town where were the English were long trailers of Heaven. There were broken bits or little vinelings among the Shawnees too. Oh, pale flowers from Heaven, now and again, in the town upon the point of land! Fall, snow—fall, snow! Burn, fire—burn, fire! The Heaven of use in some wise to a people—the Heaven of the Lord God within.

Veils of snow fell between her and the trees and

the scattered lodges, and Tom Darnel, who was medicine man, saving his life and doing to red folk no harm and many a wondrous good turn. Snow, snow! And does it snow at home, and are they sitting about the fire in the hall, and where is Miles Darling?

Tom Darnel reached the hut. An elderly man now was Tom, and a softened and a richer and a wiser. "Great flakes and no wind. It reminds me—I'll tell you some time, Virginia—of a snowy day at Westminster that's outside London and has the great Abbey. Dick Readyman's Company played there, and it was snowing like this, and we came up the river in the players' barge, and heard the bells ringing over church. Lord, how one piece of weather drags back another!"

"Come in! Old Bear and the others will be here presently."

They stood by the fire. "It drags back for me the day Miles Darling and Young Thunder brought in Ruy through the snow, over the ice of the river.—Long ago, and over for ever!"

She spoke with a dreamy passion, not in great unhappiness but as one who touches a harp, by the rivers of Babylon. The clear flames bathed her. She sat down in the rude chair, moving the crystal with her hand.

Tom Darnel selected a block of wood and nursed his knees, in his raccoon mantle, with his tall head-dress. "What shall you tell them to-day?"

"What I see in this. Pictures as they come.

And some will be to them but as forest and skies, and to some they will cry, 'Ha! That is for us!'"

"It was so that the women began to weave, and it was so that Ketelo took dressed skins and sewed them together and made a sail for his canoe, and so that they learned to paint better signs upon a skin and send it for news to the little town up the river; and so that they sent sachems and made friends with the three towns. To-day Old Bear wants to know if this country grows too small, and shall they break down the lodges and wander in the spring? That, and why does he forget and why does he remember?"

"I will tell them what I see. Put a pine knot upon the fire."

Tom obeyed, then returned to his seat. Silence fell between them. The flame sang and the lights and shadows danced, but the old ne'er-do-weel and the English girl, first-born of her tongue in Virginia, sat in stillness, too old and long companions now to trouble with speech unless it were wanted. Many ways and many times, each had seen the other tried. Many a time each had saved the other. Out of the old Tom Darnel had emerged a somewhat twisted, sometimes mountebank, but generally admirable spirit. Out of the girl who had kneeled by the river in Cherokee Land had risen a young sibyl, recollected, wise and strong. Each had understanding and liking for the other. So they dwelled amid loss and danger, and found

quickly what else it might have taken lifetimes to find.

The fire sang, the lights and shadows danced. "They are coming," said Virginia Dare, and moved slightly in her chair to face the doorway.

Old Bear and the other chiefs and old men came out of the falling snow wrapped in their mantles, with their peace time headgear, and with the long and decorated pipe which they smoked when they came to this hut. Always solemnity stood marshal to any visit to the White Prophetess. So they approached with ordered steps, one after the other, silently, with a hopeful gravity of mien. "Enter!" cried the prophetess on a singing note. Tom Darnel, white also and full of knowledge, her messenger and at times her deputy, seated himself beside her, but more lowly than her chair. Old Bear entered the hut, the others following. So many chiefs, so many billets of wood around the talking, singing, dancing fire. They sat down, Old Bear the first and opposite the woman with the crystal. "Good day, Old Bear, and each chief and counsellor!"

"Good day, Dawn-of-the-High-Day!"

They smoked, very solemnly, all of the Shawnees, the pipe passing from hand to hand, Old Bear the first, holding over the fire, dropping after a moment into the tallest, forky flame, the sacred pinch of tobacco for the Calumet of the Great Spirit. The light smoke of the fire, the thin blue smoke from the pipe, drifted here and there in the

hut. All sat in silence between the falling snow and the blue and red and gold fire. The prophetess's hands were folded in her lap, she looked through the doorway at the falling flakes and her face grew more and more quiet. It was a question, presently, if she were seeing the snow. At last spoke Old Bear, in his voice as though one were beating upon copper.

"In the morning my young men will bring so much of meat and so much of corn, also a doe skin of the whitest and best. Is there plenty of wood for burning?"

"There is, Old Bear. I thank you."

Silence again. The pipe went round once more. The smoke increased. She moved the crystal, guarding it with her hands. Said Old Bear suddenly, resonantly: "Virginia Dare, there are many children in the town. When it was summer we built new lodges; when the birds sing we must make more. My young men say, 'What is there to do? We have killed and we have killed, as killed our fathers before us, and each winter there is less dried meat in the storehouse and we bring back fewer deer over the frozen ground.' The women say, 'Plant us another cornfield for there are always more mouths to feed!' But there is an end to that. Already on each side the cornfields look into the water. The Wolf Shawnees ask the Great Spirit, 'Shall we break down this town so that an enemy may not use it, and journey until we find new and good and large hunting

grounds and make there another town? What shall we do? If we go will the Great Spirit keep far from us enemy and famine?'—White Prophetess, listen to him and tell us what he says! Look into your white stone and see and tell us!"

His voice dropped like a falling fruit. An old man over against him spoke in a thin, whispering voice, "Gather yourself together, Virginia Dare, and tell us."

Silence and the fire and the eddying smoke and the straight falling snow. Tom Darnel, rising, laid a piece of birch bark from arm to arm of the chair before the prophetess. She set the crystal thereon, and bent slightly forward, her eyes upon it. The medicine man dropped again into his place. Very still they sat—all the chiefs watching—still, still, the thin blue smoke taking and changing forms in the hut. Moments passed. Virginia Dare began to speak. "I see—I see."

"Yes—yes!" A breath, a movement went through the hut. The very flame seemed to bend toward the chair, the lump of quartz, and the woman speaking slowly, with cadence. It was, too, as though the snow wished to come into the hut, the dim trees, the village, all the Shawnee land and maybe other lands.

"I see—"

"Tell us, Woman of the Dawn, tell us!"

The seer's voice grew fuller, stronger. Life seemed to dart from her as from a spring, as from a fed flame. A rosiness was in her face, her eyes

held dark light, the masses of her hair seemed slightly to rise and wave. Something went from her to the crystal and from the crystal to her. The Indians—Tom Darnel also—were aware of that energy. It was a Gift—that collecting oneself from north, south, east, west and within!

"I see—I see the moon of blooms and singing birds. The trees grow green. I see the village of the Wolf Shawnees. About it goes the bright water. The corn is planted. I see the corn dance. All are happy. I see the chiefs and the old men and women coming to council before the town house. They smoke the great pipe. They talk. Old Bear stands and speaks."

"Yes!" rang from Old Bear.

"All nod their heads. They say 'Ha!' and 'It is the wisdom of the Great Spirit!'—It grows cloudy."

She passed her hands over the crystal. They waited, bent forward. What *was* the wisdom of the Great Spirit? The snow fell, the fire sang. Tom Darnel, wished too to know what they should do when the leaves were green, but pending that knowledge was suddenly, for all that he sat in Shawnee land, back on the *Lion* that had carried, twenty-five years ago, Walter Raleigh's colonists. Captain John White walked up and down; Simon Fernando shouted to his mariners; gentlemen and gentlewomen were gathered on the poop deck. Ananias and Eleanor Dare sat there and he read aloud. Forecastle end, Will Gosling

slept upon a coil of rope. The sails bellied, the blue sky peeped between, the great sea shone.

Virginia Dare dropped her hands. "It clears. I see—I see!"

"Yes—Yes!"

"The young men do not break down the lodges —no, they do not break down the lodges. They do not set fire to the empty storehouse; no, they do not! They do not hack down the council tree so that Creeks or Chickasaws may not sit beneath and devise evil; no, they do not! The town is whole, the river running by it sings still to Shawnees of the Wolf."

"Ha!" sounded Big Bear, and there was surprise in his voice. "Then no move?"

"Wait—wait. I see.—The Shawnees are all gathered together, for there is big choice to be made. I see them. A part stay on one side the tree, a part go to the other side. So many young men, so many old and women and children. There is a great feast and a choice.—Again no more, night in the crystal."

They waited. A choice. Snow and fire and the blue calumet smoke. Then Virginia Dare. "I see again! It is the moon of red leaves. I see two villages—villages of the Wolf Shawnees. The pleasant smoke curls from the lodges of two. They are friends—they are mother and daughter. The old one has not died—but now there are fewer children at home. She does not have to feed so many; she can live. She stays on upon the point

of land. But across the river, a day in the forest, is the daughter—new town of the Wolf Shawnees! Now the young men bring home many deer. Enough here—enough there! Corn here—corn there! Two villages begin a nation. A good path between, almost a road. The mother goes to see the daughter—the daughter comes to see the mother. I see the moon of red leaves, the moon of snow, the moon of blossoms, the moon of corn. I hear the north wind and the south wind and the east wind and the west wind, 'It was the best—it was the best that could be done!' "

"Who goes? Look!"

"The crystal does not show.—I see Big Bear and he stays here with the old council tree.—There is a figure going—leading those who go—I do not see plainly.—It has a look of Young Panther."

"Ha! Yes!"

"I see. Virginia Dare stays here. Tom Darnel stays here. It is right! The old village. When the new wishes to know—to learn—it sends wise men back over the path, across the river, to this hut. —I see friendship. I see the Wolf Shawnees grow wise and strong, as long as they serve the Great Spirit—as long as they serve the Great Spirit. The crystal sleeps. It is all."

It pleased them—evidently it pleased them—what had showed itself. It was not always so. She could remember times when what she had seen had roused grudging, obstinacy, even storms that might overwhelm. She had come through and Tom

Darnel had come through. But now what she had seen only needed to be shown to Big Bear and he caught at it—others with him. They had the political sense—Indians.

They were gone. To-morrow would see meat and corn and fagots at her door. They were gone—her people now. Shawnees—the people of Virginia Dare who fell into their hands when she was a girl, and on the whole they were kind, and she lived among them and molded herself to them, and when she died—an old woman perhaps—was like them. She sat staring, truly lost. Presently, as though she did not know what she did, she drew the crystal again before her.

Tom Darnel put pine knots upon the fire and pushed back to the wall the blocks of wood. Now he would talk a little with Virginia and then wrap his mantle about him and depart to his own hut, three hundred yards away among the trees. He turned. The light bathed her, the chair seemed a high one, high and large like a throne chair; her hair appeared to roll and wave but her bosom was still. She seemed scarcely to breathe. "Virginia!" he exclaimed. "Virginia! They're gone!"

"Look—look—look in the crystal!"

He came to her. "What do you see? I see nothing!"

She spoke thrillingly. "Do you not see—do you not see them? Two men in a green forest—growing always larger and clearer because they come this way—White men! They are—They are—"

He grew excited. "What do you mean? Are you not seeing what you make yourself see—what you think in your judgment ought to be seen?"

"I do not know. No, no! I see what is and will be—is and will be! The forest is red and yellow. They come closer. They are—they are—Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez!"

"No!"

"They are—they are! Look—look! They are close. Look!" She sprang to her feet; the crystal rolled to the floor. Tom Darnel thought light streamed from her, light in great pulses, light and warmth. "He is coming! He will come before the fall of the leaf!"

"Nearly seven years, Virginia! We do not know if they came back alive from the war that summer! It's many a year," cried Tom, "and many a score of leagues! Wake, child, wake!"

She raised her arms. "I was never so awake! He is coming before the fall of the leaf!"

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CAVE

THE great pine crashing down, Ruy's warning shout coming too late, Miles Darling was caught beneath and his leg broken. In the furious wind and lightning and thunder and pelting rain, Ruy and Young Thunder got him loose, and when he said "Plague! I can't walk!" got him somehow, between them, through the storm, to the cave whose mouth they had noted, passing, a little while back. Slow, panting work, but at last they were there, under shelter, in a dry, large place, set in an out-cropping mass of limestone, masked by a giant boulder and an equally giant hemlock. Young Thunder and Eagle Feather built a fire of sticks and cones, for the place was all gloom and chilliness with the hour and the tempest and the sense of consternation. Golden Hawk lay silent on the floor covered with fine needles of the hemlock, blown there through the entrance, age on age, from grandfather tree and father and son. Golden Hawk's eyes were shut and his mouth too, and his face, for all its bronzing, shone pale. The fire made, they set the bone. They knew how to do that, being adepts now in what men needed to

know who went out into the wilderness on a long, long quest. Bark splints—and, "Rest here, Miles, for us all for a good long while! It's all right. It's a good place."

"I'm sorry! I ought better to have looked out—"

"Nonsense! We'll lie by and rest and remember."

"You had better go on, you two. That last hornet's nest may choose to come this way."

"Have you any more delirious remarks to make?" asked Eagle Feather, and Young Thunder laughed and sat down to cook.

In the night time the storm sank away. In the morning, Miles being without fever, and the sun coming cheerfully in between the hemlock boughs and around the great boulder set like a warder, they proceeded to examine the cave. Here was a round chamber, but behind them it narrowed and grew low and by littles ran into gross darkness. At first they had thought, "Bear den, perhaps!" but that was not so. The light and smoke of their fire had driven apart and out from some deep crack a cluster of bats. They circled, flapping their wings, then quitted the cave. Now silence and solitariness and the gold light, sifting and splashing. Ruy rounded a buttress of stone and came upon a smaller chamber dimly lit. Eyes growing accustomed, he made out stone protrusious like shelves, and upon these heaped articles.

He stepped back to Golden Hawk. "There are

in there gourds and wooden dishes and dressed skins and firewood, and a quiver full of arrows and a great wampum belt. And over there the wall is fire-blackened, but it is long since the fire burned. A year, I should say."

The owner and the fire-maker never appeared to trouble them. From certain indications they concluded that he had been a wandering medicine man, belonging perhaps to a dead village three or four leagues from this spot. The huts of the village had been destroyed and the people were departed. So they moved—Indians—when for this or that reason their old habitation passed from their liking. The cave had been their medicine man's haunt, where he brought and stored matters, where he came when he told the village that he was going up into the Mount. Now the village was gone and all this region a solitude.

Fifty feet from the hemlock gushed a spring, cold and free amid mint and tall nodding flowers. A hundred yards from that ran a narrow brook with a pool for bathing. This was a pocket valley among hills. Everywhere stood a rich, tall, wide-girthed forest. Young Thunder and Eagle Feather had luck in hunting. The war band that they had evaded a while back did not come this way. It had been a foreign band, going through, by an ancient trail, from north to south. Now it was afar. Peace—peace. Sunny, shadowy, quiet.

Miles Darling mended. He lay in the mouth of the cave, propped up, whittling an arrow with

his good English knife. Ruy and Young Thunder were hunting. At first they would have one stay with him while the other went, but now in the second week of quiet as though the world were just made, he scouted that and drove them forth.

From beyond the boulder emerged the slightest sound in the world. The twig that broke would hardly have been thicker than a bone needle. Miles Darling ended his whistle precisely upon a bird note, put out his arm and drew to him his bow and quiver. He took out and fitted an arrow. Quite a long space of time with nothing to see or to hear, then above the boulder shone a pair of eyes. They ducked at once. Miles Darling called in Shawnee, "Friend!" and poured into his voice sunshine and quiet. With that, there came around the boulder the medicine man to whom the cave belonged.

About this time, in that England that was now to Golden Hawk a land of phantasy and unconscious memory, William Shakespeare, having long observed that there were such characters, was putting forth, one after the other, fools who were hardly fools, who, at any rate, got on in their world. Knavery and folly seasoned with innocence and wisdom—such seemed the recipe. In a simpler society than European, such persons became shamans and received honor. They liked to make up; they liked to wreathe themselves with dried—and sometimes with living—serpents, and to shake huge gourds with pebbles within; they

liked to caper, they liked to threaten, and at the same time liked to succor. Such an one was Totetha, who in addition was of a roving disposition. His village had removed itself from three leagues this side of his old cave to ten leagues the other side. That was nothing, if now and then, say once a year, he wished to see the old place again. That was what he was about now. He wished to stay two or three days in his ancient lair, then go back to the village of the Fox Shawnees and say he had been over the rosy rim of the world, with one of the Great Spirit's subordinates, clean to the door, perhaps, of the Great Spirit's painted lodge.

Now who was this strange person lying in the mouth of his cave? Personage, rather than person. Totetha stared at the Indian not Indian—not Shawnee nor Cherokee nor Creek nor Miami nor anything else that ever he had met. Bow and arrow, yes; moccasins and hunting dress, yes; keen eyes and voice of reassurance, yes; a man, yes, a young man—but then the differences began to shrill, "Look at me! Look at me!" Big—tall and big—that wasn't so much; there were big Indians. But yellow hair and beard, gray eyes, skin that cave life for a fortnight was restoring to the English tint—there the differences shouted, shouted too in something like taste and smell and subtile touch, or something analogous to these, something that made atmosphere. For all of likeness, difference, difference! Totetha's eyes bulged. It was true then—the mockbird's story that never quite

died out of the land. *White* men, speaking a tongue that was not Indian, and having and doing marvels. Here was a *white* man in his cave! A godling! Who could show a medicine man most valuable ways of seeing and doing.

He had the curiosity and the practical fearlessness of a child. Come closer? Why, of course. Sit and talk? With all the will in the world, seeing that the godling had Shawnee.

Golden Hawk reached for a pipe and a little gourd of tobacco. Light it, friend! Fire is yonder. Totetha took up a coal and lighted it, in the white man's hand. Golden Hawk puffed, then handed it to the other. Totetha sent out a small cloud of blue smoke, then ceremoniously laid aside the pipe. Bread and salt had been eaten. The godling was lying upon deer skin that Totetha had haled there, that was Totetha's. Doubtless Totetha's, too, the firewood burning, small and gay, on the old fireplace; certainly Totetha's the gourds and wooden bowls. But only to see and hear a godling paid for all that! Totetha waited.

"It is your cave?" asked the golden-haired.

Totetha signified that it was, but that he was glad if for a time it pleased one who must be near the supernatural.—How had such an one broken the leg bone?

"Falling tree. It is doing well.—Yes, I have companions. They will be here presently. But I will not let them hurt you."

"Medicine men are safe wherever they go," said

Totetha. "Man hurt him; Great Spirit hurt man —hurt him much worse."

"Very well, then," replied Golden Hawk. "You are doubly safe," and fell again to whittling his arrow. It occurred to Totetha to state that a large party of Fox Shawnees was immediately behind him, but instantly he saw that the godling did not believe him and hedged. "They are not very near —about as far as our new village. No, they have not started, but they can start at once, at any time. Totetha goes on ahead—always he goes on ahead."

They sat and talked. Totetha was drawn to tell —the superman had a way with him—all he knew of this country and of countries beyond this. Fox Shawnees hereabouts—yonder Bear Shawnees; yonder, Rabbit; yonder, down great river, Wolf. Why did they seem to be restless, forever wandering, forever leaving old and making new villages? That was Shawnee—the Great Spirit liked to have them active! Cherokee, Creek and Miami had perhaps a little to do with it, but very little. When they got too many for old villages and hunting grounds—more and more foxes, wolves, bears and rabbits—what did white man in their wondrous country do in such circumstances?

"You wander and wander. Have you ever heard of a white woman—a white woman and a white man—living in a Shawnee town?"

After a while Totetha produced, "The Wolf Shawnees are the farthest from here. They are

very far. They live on a big river, the Wolf Shawnees, and use many canoes." He grinned. "They have a big canoe with a sapling standing up from it and skins sewed together fastened to the sapling. I have heard of it. Totetha hears all kind of curious things. When any one comes on a visit to the Fox Shawnees he says at once, 'O Totetha, I have a curious thing for you!' The man who told me said that the skins fastened to the sapling belonged to the West Wind and give the young men strength to row and they go very fast. The Wolf Shawnees have," Totetha's voice lowered, "a prophetess, but she is not talked about, she is so able to hear you and make you suffer. I have heard say that she is white—but Totetha thinks that is only to make more marvel. Totetha thinks she is Shawnee—daughter of old Hare-that-runs."

Golden Hawk continued to whittle his arrow. "What more do you know of the Wolf Shawnees?"

Totetha produced many things of the past. "That is very interesting," said the godling, listening and whittling. "But look, brother, and tell me something that goes on now."

Totetha considered and remembered. "A Mink Shawnee told me—he is a wanderer and came up that way—that the Wolf Shawnees will break down their village and move. They need new hunting-grounds."

"Move! When?"

This year. While the leaves were green, sup-

posed Totetha. He had no idea where they were going. "Up river maybe, maybe cross river and go a long way toward Great Spirit's Lodge. Tell me," said Totetha, "what *you* think about the Great Spirit's Lodge."

"After a while I will, brother. It flows like water out of your hand! News—it may be she—and the whole thing is gone like the waterfall and the mist of the waterfall!—Anything else from the Mink Shawnee?"

"He said that the medicine man of the Wolf Shawnees is named Tomadarnel."

Golden Hawk had ceased his whistling. Yet there seemed to Totetha, in the day, the cave, the forest and the company, a great harmonious humming. It was not caught by the ear, no! but it was there. At last it sharpened into words, and the words must be the godling's repeated, "Tomadarnel, Tomadarnel—Virginia Dare, Virginia Dare, Virginia Dare!"

Home with meat came Eagle Feather and Young Thunder. Golden Hawk presented Totetha. But nothing was said of the Wolf Shawnees nor of their prophetess and medicine man, nor of their wandering away from their town into the plains of the setting sun. Instead there was dinner, and after dinner Young Thunder, after just a glance from the lamed chief's gray eyes, offered to show Totetha the bathing pool. Totetha said he knew it well, but had the Cherokee found the small cave behind the grapevine? "No—come

show!" said Young Thunder, and the two stepped forth together. "Now is the time," thought Totetha, with cunning, "to find out from the red man about the white men."

Ruy Valdez sat upon a stone over against Miles Darling. "Tomadarnel! Yes, it must be at last! Wolf Shawnees, upon a great river. But they are moving away—"

"Yes. Maybe now, while we speak—"

"It has been our luck. Well, they will leave a trail." He looked at the other's outstretched leg. "The day you are well enough—"

"I am well enough now—for you and Young Thunder to depart."

Silence. Ruy, who had made a slight movement, sat still, his eyes upon the cave floor. At last. "You mean that you wish me to go on to find her—"

"I wish her to be found."

"In a month's time you should be well."

"In a month they may have broken village and gone, who knows where! Just so many more turns and doublings—just so much farther and longer, and all the trail confused, lost maybe."

"Seven years, and we have not separated—and now comes the clearest hope yet—and you would have me go on alone—"

"The only question is—sheer lack of me. One of us instead of two, and can one do it? One with Young Thunder. Maybe not, and it gives pause. But maybe yea—Lord God helping. If you stay here—each night we dream, each day we say, 'The

bird is flying! The bird is flying! It grows smaller, smaller—there is only bare sky.' "

"Miles—"

"Yes, Ruy."

"If I go on, what shall you do?"

"When I can, I shall follow. You know well how to mark the path so that I can.—In the meantime I will keep here this Shawnee that's half an innocent."

Again silence. The small fire burned at the side of the rock chamber. The feather smoke curling forth, the boulder, the thick hemlock, the unpeopled region, the blue sky, the thrush singing. Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez, Miles Darling and Ruy Valdez and Virginia Dare. At last Ruy spoke:

"If I go and she is found, it is you finding her just as much as I—it is more. You more than I. I would tell her that at once."

Said Miles Darling. "First of all, I want her found.—You don't remember, but I do. Once when she was five and I was eight years old, she thought she was lost in the big reeds that grew by our first town. I heard her crying, and I went in and found her. It seemed a great, lonely world to me also. There she was, standing weeping, not knowing which way to go, and when I came she clung and cried, 'I was lonely and a-feared, but you've come, you've come!' "

CHAPTER XXIV

ESCAPE

THE mountains were departed, dropped in a troop that daily lowered, grew more hazy, gray, ghost-like, then in an hour vanished. The land rolled; there were hills and vales enough, hills and vales and streams, and the forever-ever forest. Villages also at long intervals, to be observed afar and given forest room. Now and then human kind, combined or solitary. Once a fight, and once a fight only avoided through a masterpiece of strategy. Now and again indifferents, once or twice the friendly. A knife slashed Ruy's shoulder, but it was not deep, and that was all. The human kind were thinly spread in the world. For every such an one roamed a many and a many of the other kinds—wing and hoof and paw and talon, creepers and flyers and runners. And as for the trees and the bushes and the vines, theirs was the earth and the fullness thereof.

Dawns and noons and eves and middle nights; dawns and noons and eves and middle nights. Shining weather, cloudy weather, rainy weather, rain and cloud and shine. Journey, watch, get food, sleep. Journey, watch, get food, sleep.

Life was rhythm; rhythm was life. Music never began and would never end. Always there was music.

Where was the wide river? Time now to find it, high time. By now they knew of it from more than Totetha.

Back in the cave how was Golden Hawk faring?

From a hill top they saw the river—saw it suddenly, coming to a high knoll and climbing, coming out through laurel to a round bare place like a skull. It lay afar like a sickle, it gleamed; they knew at once that it was a wide river, the widest they had ever come to in this land, a wide river, shining under the westering sun, the river they hunted. "Ugh!" grunted Young Thunder.

"River—River like a sickle!" Ruy breathed. "May we reap now!"

The next day they came down between giant trees to this water. Up or down? They thought —putting together fifty indications that to other than forest dwellers would seem no indications at all—that they would go up the river. So they traveled for two days, and came, again in the sunset light, to a place where the river made a loop like the letter U. Upon this bank it ran into the land, upon the opposite shore was left a peninsula with so narrow a neck that in certain lights it looked an island. There was what they sought—the old village of the Wolf Shawnees! They saw the clearings and the waving corn, they saw the lodges, they

saw the smoke feathers, dark and waving, against the carnation sky.

Eagle Feather and Young Thunder rested, sitting still and gazing. A moon almost full poured silver as soon as the ruby had gone from the west. Eagle Feather and Young Thunder swam the river, a mile above the town. A wide river it was, but they swam it steadily, under the moon. Here spread the bank shadow, here were sycamores and curtains of grape vines falling from on high. The two old companions, the red man and the white man left the water, shook themselves, spoke in whispers, found a bed of leaves and, the bending boughs for tent, lay down upon the warm earth for the night to pass.

Leagues and leagues away, in the medicine man's cave, Miles Darling, a stick that Totetha had brought him in hand, again practiced walking. Twice across the cave and back. Totetha watched. "Before long!" said Golden Hawk and returned to the fire. "Where are they to-night—where are they?"

"Tell me another story," said Totetha. "Tell me again about London Bridge and Queen Bess—"

When the dawn came it showed the heaviest river mist. The water might not be seen; the trees only a little way off were faint gray silhouettes. Ruy Valdez and Young Thunder ate dried meat and parched corn, said little, stretched their limbs in the fog-drenched, chill air, waited for the beams

to thin, to tear rents in, the universal mist. To stir abroad, try to be active and find out things, might be to walk in the blank whiteness, among indeterminate shadows, straight into trouble.

The sun was strong, the mist was weak. The sun crumbled it in his hands; it vanished. But there still hung dew upon all the world.

"What is best?" asked Ruy Valdez. "I think now, Young Thunder, it were best to say a prayer!" Young Thunder answered. "Eagle Feather very good, *very* good, Eagle Feather!—but why did Great Spirit let Golden Hawk break his leg?"

"Perhaps, if we perish, to let not us all perish." He parted the curtain of vine and looked out. "Quiet! Canoe—"

The canoe with four occupants passed within a hundred feet. When it was gone the river gleamed bare above and below. The two from Croatan Town first looked on all sides, then cautiously stepped from their tent upon the side away from the stream. Many great-boled trees, growing wide and high, little undergrowth, a fine, pleasant grass, the great beam of the sun broken into a thousand, thousand small shapes of gold, a little wind astir and naught beside. When presently they struck a slender path, intenser grew the caution. They did not use the path but kept near it among the deep trees. Young Thunder climbed a mighty oak. When he came down, "Village *there*. Big as Croatan Town. Much corn. Canoes. All goes so, toward river. Big wood

so far. Nearest thing one, two lodges by themselves. Little garden, blue feather flower. Then trees like wampum belt, then village all together."

They sat down among outcropping root folds to think it out and make some plan. They had bow and arrow, they had sharp knives; the one had high forest wit, the other that and something more; they had long experience and many wiles, and they had Intention sinewy, alert and winged. While they sat there the dew was drunk by the sun and the morning began to advance.

They would go nearer the village. Rising, they went, shut lips, feather foot, between the great trees, avoiding the path, though keeping it in view. The grass spread soft under foot; the maples had begun to turn but the oaks stood green. The shadows were violet, the sun, gold dust of the Indies. Suddenly a thrush sang, and it was the sweetest ever. A long dangle of broad yellowing vine leaf and purply clusters brushed their foreheads. They went on softly.

Toward them, down the woodland aisle, came in sight a bronze turkey, walking statelily. They stopped involuntarily. Young Thunder's hand twitched. But this was not the time for the best of game. Behind the first turkey came another, then another, a fourth. They were used to seeing these birds in small numbers together, but there was something about the step and look of these. A fifth, a sixth, a seventh, others behind. Mind flew

back to Croatan Town and Dame Cis's enterprises. "Tame—they are tame!"

The heart beat with that. Of themselves, Indians did not tame these great fowl.

The string of turkeys, older and younger, came, stepping high, down the glade. The sun glinted upon combs and feathers. Twenty! There stepped into light, around the trunk of a mighty hickory, their drover.

She was clad in fringed doeskin, her hair waved and flowed, deep brown with gold threads. Her face was not an Indian face. She came nearer, walking thoughtfully, and with her walked beauty and a subtile might. Rose and sang in Ruy Valdez's heart and brain a nightingale. "Virginia Dare! Oh, it is Virginia Dare!"

Her turkeys before her, she came slowly from tree to tree, now in sun, now in shadow. It seemed that she was deeply thinking. A green branch that she had in her hand brushed the grass and little flowers. The violet, gold and fragrant air beat, beat with a thousand, thousand fulfillments, a thousand, thousand promises. Ruy Valdez saw the world transfigured.

She was here. The rise and fall of her breast could be seen, the minute, perpetual play of thought and feeling in a face of which, in any land, a poet, meeting it, would have said, "It is much worth while." She was here. From his covert Ruy spoke unsteadily, "Virginia Dare!"

She stood. The branch dropped from her hand.

"Who is it? Where are you who said that?" Then she saw him. "Come into the light! Ruy Valdez!—Where is Miles Darling?"

"A falling tree broke his leg. He is a good way behind us, waiting in a cavern. We had news that the Wolf Shawnees were moving. He said, 'Go on, go on, Eagle Feather, lest we miss her again!'"

"The maple and hickory are painting themselves. —I saw you both, I believed you would come.— Is that Young Thunder?"

"Yes. He has hunted you with us through seven years."

"Shining Water became the wife of Big Panther far back there in Shawnee land—long ago. She is happy, I think. Tom Darnel is here. He is medicine man of the Wolf Shawnees. I am the White Prophetess. My hut is not far. I will hide you and when it is night we shall depart."

They had spoken standing, with a space of sun-freckled forest floor between them, spoken in even voices, in an involuntariness, even a partial unconsciousness, as in a dream made only to impart information. But now, with the sudden pouring song of the thrush from a tree removed, the spell broke. Her face worked, she sprang forward, and in a moment she and Ruy were clinging each to the other.

Years back there, in Croatan Town, they had been brother and sister, she and he and Miles, brothers and sister. He was Ruy Valdez the boy

again, she the budding girl. They clasped. "Ruy! Ruy! Ruy!"—"Virginia! Jinny!"—"Ruy, tell me of mother and father and Susan and Eunice and Humphrey and Philippa—"

They sat down in the flickering light and shade, the turkeys straying, pecking, around them. "Home—tell me of home! No, no one will come this way. It is my walk."

An hour passed—they had so much to tell and to ask—then she started up and said that she must go back, she was to do such and such a thing, this morning, for some one in the village. "But you—you must lie here through the day. No one will come this way. But I will send you Tom Darnel. He will bring you food, and at dusk you shall come to my hut. Then when all is still and the moon is lighting us, we will take a canoe and go away."

On that she left them, and her turkeys came about her and went with her, stepping statelily through the grass, sun upon their combs and feathers.

Another hour and there came Tom Darnel, in his dress cut fantastically, with his medicine man headdress. "Well, well!" said Tom, half crying, "Trust God that the rivers at last get to the sea!"

He had food for them, he went and came. When night fell he took them through the grove to the hut before which, in a paled yard, stood the blue feather flowers. They moved noiselessly, cautiously, but there was little danger. All this

was temple precinct. Prophetess and medicine man, so long as they did great things for the Wolf Shawnees, were hedged with sanctity.

The hut was firelit. They entered and Tom Darnel dropped the heavy mats behind them. They saw where she lived, and the possessions and ways of her, and her sitting there in a rude great chair, sylvan queen and sibyl. "Sit down—sit down. Oh, Ruy, tell me more of home!"

The moon shone bright. Old Town of the Shawnees went to sleep. Tom Darnel gave a great pouch filled with various matters to Young Thunder and slipped the thong of another over his own shoulder. Virginia Dare wrapped herself in her mantle of softest skins. The fire had burned into embers. With her moccasined foot she pushed against these, and small, bright flames again lighted the place. She gazed around her, saying farewell. How filled and thronged was her house with subtle shapes, with memories, thoughts, perceptions, only she herself could have told. She went to the shelf and took from its wrapping the great piece of pure quartz. She held it in her hand for a minute, in the firelight, then softly laid it upon the spreading arm of that council chair. All the little flames, saffron and red and blue, linked and danced within it, left for the succeeding prophet.

"Come!" said Virginia Dare. Tom Darnel drew aside the entrance mat. They stepped without among the embowering, sleeping, moon-flooded trees and flowers. Two bowshots away

began the Shawnee lodges. Again she paused and stood and looked, saying farewell to a place and a folk that had been kind to her. Fibers of her heart and mind would always be enwound here. She touched the blue flowers, she turned and gazed again at her hut, then passed, going before them, from that which had been a home. Eagle Feather and Young Thunder let her lead. The four went so lightly through the night, light as moths, back through the grove a piece, then downward towards the river. It was here, so wide and silver, and in a covert of sycamore lay hid a canoe.

Entering this, they broke the withe that held it to a tree, and Eagle Feather and Young Thunder took up the paddles. Soundlessly as might be they went up the river in the shadow for a distance, then shot out into the silver and crossed the wide flood. When they came to the other side they made careful landing that should leave no trace, and forth from the canoe turned it adrift. The current seized it, they watched it under the moon, going down the stream, then moved away from the water side into the profound, the sighing, the moon-washed forest.

CHAPTER XXV

THE FALL OF THE LEAF

DAYS, nights, dropping bead by bead. Colored beads, fine, strangely perfumed beads, beads of amber and ruby and topaz. Beads that Ruy Valdez must treat as a rosary, each one a prayer that was silent but that summed his being. Beads with varying colors and touch and depth, yet each meant Love. Love—love—love—they dropped like that, dropped silently, save as love cannot but speak and in many ways.

That "Only a memory now and a fair picture on high", had vanished—could it ever have been? That tender brotherliness—rush of home and little more than children together—of that meeting when she came through the grove to him, around her those great birds she had tamed, that too—mild, faint music, moonlight, babble of tributary stream—that too was gone. It was buried in the resounding chords, in the fierce strength of the sun, in the surge of the ocean.

Virginia Dare. Virginia Dare. Virginia Dare.

But silent—but be silent while the beads dropped, silent as one could be. Regard, over and

over again regard, Miles Darling in the cavern still or coming to meet them. Miles and Ruy who heretofore, if ever they struggled, struggled to give each other the advantage, not to take it. Miles and Ruy—Miles and Ruy—Miles and Ruy and Virginia Dare.

Amber and ruby and topaz. He was seated upon a rock at the foot of which they were making an afternoon halt. All the forest went in waves of amber and ruby and topaz. This was a somewhat open and lifted space. He looked up between walls of golden linden and flamy sugar trees to a pale blue sky. Three birds—swallows—were flying there. They made a triangle, subtly and constantly changing line as they flew, but the flight itself was constant, straight across the wide blue, upper lake. His mind named them as he watched. Virginia Dare. Miles Darling. Ruy Valdez. They were gone. Blue sky, and below amber and ruby and topaz. He cast down his eyes and saw Virginia Dare where she lay asleep on gray moss dappled with fallen leaves. She lay resting, asleep after hours of forest travel, a fair woman, all in tawny dress, long braids over her shoulder and breast, clear profile against the earth, long lashes touching the smooth bronzed cheek, bronzed but with the northern, the English tint exquisitely there. None here knew it, but she looked like her mother; she looked like Eleanor Dare.

Ruy Valdez ached, ached. He folded his arms

upon his knees and bowed his head upon his arms. Now he no longer saw Virginia with the outward eye. It made no difference, the inner was so clear. Starting up, he left the rock and moved away into the forest. Drooping boughs, red and yellow, hid him. He threw himself upon the earth. "Love—love—love—love—love!"

"If I can make her love me. If I use no foul means, and yet make her love me. If, serving her, loving her, she grows to feel, 'This is a world that I love—this world named Ruy! I want no other —I want Ruy.' If I say no word, only love, and she comes to feel it, and fire runs to fire—how can that be helped? I cannot help loving and serving. All that is fair, Golden Hawk, all that is fair!"

As he turned, he thought, "A Spaniard loves with the sun and the vine and the mastery of Spain—"

But that did not fully account and describe.

The next day they came to a brawling, rather wide stream that must be crossed. Great stones and here and there a pebbly, fairy strand raised themselves above the water, but between were swirling, deepish currents. No helpless soul was Virginia Dare! She could herself have forded the stream with the others, and made ready to do so. But Eagle Feather spoke to Young Thunder, and the two crossed and clasped hands and made for her a chair.

"I can do it, Eagle Feather! No chairs had Shining Water and I, the streams we crossed going into Shawnee Land!"

"No. But now you shall have one, Bright Dawn!"

She gave way, and they bore her so over stream. Since they must pick their way, the crossing took minutes. Her arm was over Eagle Feather's shoulder, her hand touched his embrowned arm, felt the rhythmic life. Her face was close to his downbent face. She saw him close; she breathed his manhood and his beauty. "Ruy—dear Ruy!" said her heart.

The stream was overpassed. They set her down. Here ran a stretch of pines, extraordinarily fragrant beneath the noon sun. Underfoot lay a fine, brown carpet. They walked easily, lightly, in a dream.

That night a panther screamed near them in the wood. Tom Darnel, sitting up, muttered an objurgation and threw dry wood upon their dying fire. But Eagle Feather and Young Thunder stepped out of the circle of light and stood listening. Sometimes panther scream or owl hoot meant not beasts but men. But the panther screamed again and the trained ear knew it for true panther, not Indians ready to attack, imitating for their own purposes. Behind them the fire blazed. The scream came a third time, but farther away; then again, but faint and afar. Young Thunder grunted and went back to the fire.

But Eagle Feather, who had been wakeful, sat down upon the leaves away from the pulsing light. Again the great music had its way with him.

And now from the deeps of life it seemed to rend life. A tempest rose and cried and the lightning glared.—Two white men and one woman in the world. One man only might wed her, have her, cherish her, grow with her into one redoubled form and so, joining power, put forth further life, put forth children—pouring himself into these, living endlessly so, ensuring life, though white bones crumbled in the wilderness! Children, a tribe, a nation. Unperishing life.—One only of two! "O loved, loved, loved! O Ruy Valdez, take thy only chance!"

As though life answered him, her voice spoke beside him. "Ruy!" The young trees moved, she stood, the Desired One, behind her the light of the fire. "You are not forth after the panther? Come back and rest, for you need it." He followed her, mute, took his old bed and she went to hers, screened by a hemlock bough, all bronze in the firelight.

From this day began with him a courtship not the less profound and determined that it was so subtle, fine and hardly admitted by himself to himself. It was as though great Nature acted for him, earth and time and the history of men acted. But one named Ruy Valdez skillfully, skillfully guided. Forester skill—old, Spanish skill—poet skill—skill of Eros, King of Poets! But never an open word of love. What was to be done was to put love in possession, mutual, impregnable, before Golden Hawk stood in the path.

The forest deepened color. If the Wolf Shawnees searched for Prophetess and Medicine Man they had searched without finding. There was so great a world to search over! Bright Dawn and Tomadarnel, regarding with the inner eye a Shawnee who had his own ambitions toward seership and magic, shrewdly guessed that this one would early check the search. "Let them go!" this one would say. "She has left the clear stone that shows things. Let them go!" They seemed in a solitude, in the utter, peaceful forest, sufficient to itself, dreaming royally of spring across winter.

They passed the hill whence Eagle Feather and Young Thunder first had seen the river. They passed the riven oak where Young Thunder had killed the bear. They passed the high, shattered, sun-baked ledge where they had found a city and nation of rattlesnakes. They came to the open place, the signs of ancient planting, where had been of old time a village. There stood a broken hut, long empty, it seemed. The sun hung low, the wilderness stretching solitary, a spring bubbling amid mint and latest flowers. A black walnut tree had rained down walnuts that lay among the grass, fragrant, in cases of tarnished green. "We slept here," said Eagle Feather. "There is the ash of our fire, and none has been here since."

They kindled fire and ate their frugal supper, fish that Tom Darnel had taken from a stream a while back and parched corn brought from the Town of the Shawnees. All the west hung red.

Supper over, Tom—Croatan Town and Will Gosling and Ned Barecombe and many another coming nearer and nearer the horizon—found himself in so content and genial a mood that presently in the rich dusk he began to sing an old song:

"Harken, gentles all,
For I sing of Robin Hood,
That was the gladdest yeoman
Ever in greenwood stood!

His bow it was the stoutest,
His gray eye was so keen,
His laughter made you caper,
He dressed in Lincoln green—"

"Ugh!" spoke Young Thunder. "Too much noise."

Virginia Dare also put out a hand. "Hush, Tom! It seems to me there are things in the shadows."

"Oh, ghosts!" said Tom. "It was an old town." But he ceased his singing, and Eagle Feather, getting up, walked about the place, from the spring around again. "Nothing!" he said, coming back.

But, later, Virginia Dare could not settle to sleep. At last she rose to her knees from the dry, warm, pleasant turf and stayed so, still as an image, all her senses keyed for happenings beyond the usual reck of the senses. Moments passed, then with one movement she was upon her feet. "Ruy! Tom! Young Thunder!"

All sprang up, gazing, listening, but there seemed only the quiet, starry night, and a myriad of fireflies flickering. Bubble of the spring came to them, cool smell of mint.

"The hut!" spoke the White Prophetess. "Come to the hut. Take up the things!"

Command was hers. They obeyed, but their feet had hardly touched the stone at the door before the familiar war yell sounded and a flung hatchet barely missed Tom Darnel.—They were in the dark shelter, in with their own bows and arrows and knives—behind them flared up momentarily the fire they had quitted.

"They are not many."

"No, not many. Five, I think."

The five with wiliness began first a parley, and that producing only silence, an attack. An arrow, entering, struck in the dirt floor. Eagle Feather drew his bow. The arrow sang, a man was down.

The four backed into the shadow for consultation. The hurt one presently wriggled through the grass like a snake and joined them. "Go away! Go away!" breathed and muttered Tom Darnel. "This is no place for you five. This is ours—ours—ours."

In the dead silence when he had ceased they heard the bubble of the spring. A drift of fireflies passed the low and narrow doorway. The fire without sank till it was only a red mark upon the ground. A small cool wind began to blow and to sound as though wires were stretched for it.

There was something strange about this sound, it came and went so fitfully, and yet as it were with an intention. Ruy Valdez and Tom Darnel and Virginia Dare knew that bough and vine and grass were its harp—yet it rested strange, the sound. The tension and excitement of danger lowered and altered, and with this came definitely a question as to whether those Shawnees would after all advance against them, past the walnut tree and the spring. Young Thunder moved. "This place has ghosts. I thought it before! They are over yonder."

He felt cold and thin and light and far away, even with his arrow pointed and his keen knife ready he felt all that. Tom Darnel, on hands and knees, looking through the aperture, reported. "Something's struck them. They're going toward the spring—no, they're not. They don't seem to like this or that or the other! It's an eerie place! I felt it at supper."

Eagle Feather spoke. "An old field and an old razed town. Magical and ghost-protected.—Let that enter your marrow, Shawnee!"

The fireflies went up and down, and kept on that curious, definitely crooning wind. The air was chill; it felt cold on the brow and the backs of the hands. Something, something was borne upon it! Now they saw again the four Shawnees, and they were advancing upon the hut and the four within prepared themselves. The four oncoming figures wavered and stopped—they seemed to see and feel

something cold and thin but authoritative. Perhaps they knew the story of this place; perhaps signs rushed over and against them that the English and the Spaniard and the Cherokee knew not of. But for reasons or for no reason panic fear stepped into the ancient habitat of long-dead, red men. Gutturally exclaiming, the Shawnees turned and with some hurry went away, nor did the four from Croatan Town ever see them again.

At dawn the four went on, very watchful this day and night, and the next. But they seemed to be traveling in another direction from the road of the five Shawnees. It rained, and the wind shook down the first detachments of colored leaves, and they moved over glistening red and yellow, under scudding clouds and a leaden downpour.

CHAPTER XXVI

YOUNG THUNDER DEPARTS

THE forest grew a splendor and a dream. They passed the beaver dam and village where Eagle Feather and Young Thunder had rested a day and made new moccasins, they passed the silver waterfall. They were among a plenitude of hills and high, abrupt, tree-crowned bluffs. They had alarms, there were escapes. But on the whole, vast peace, vast jeweled dream. As in a waking dream the inner life went fast, the outer slowly. Journeying afoot in all the forest that was, where stretched no outer paths, where going must be sinuous past belief, progression toward any distant bourne was slow indeed. Days of flame, days of toil and beauty . . .

His companionship began to fill the cup of Virginia Dare.

He was a young man good to look at. He stood and moved, neither too tall nor too short, supple and fine in movement or at rest, olive-skinned, dark-eyed, white-teethed, with a very especial smile, half melancholy, half delight, with a voice, too, full of cadence and subtlety. He, he and Young Thunder, had rescued her and Tom. He was her

comrade now, share and share in the forest. But let danger rear its head and he sprang in front. He had mother wit, power to draw and to hold, and power to go forth. He had goodness; she looked into his dark eyes and was sure of that. He had strength, strength of a clean, limber sword blade, of a right bow, rightly made and bent. He had mind and fancy, and that was much to the White Prophetess, the child of Ananias and Eleanor Dare.

They passed the great gum tree where he and Young Thunder had robbed the bees.

Sitting talking, in the middle of the day that was set aside for rest, or at sunset when they camped, or by the evening fire before they slept, for long it was "Tell me—tell me more of home!" But he and Young Thunder and Golden Hawk had not been home themselves for several years, and before that only for those winter months when one could do little seeking in a pathless, bitter wilderness. At last she had all that he could tell, all the dear and near minute things. She came back to them over and over, but there was now time for other wanderings together by the path of the word. These increased. There was all the world of memories, and all the world of present happenings, and all the deep, compounded world of characteristics, of tastes and guesses, wonderings and judgments. Both had mind and a certain richness of soul. They were princes, interchanging richly. And when the word was not suffi-

cient, they rested upon a wordless communion.

Spain—the Indies—Europe—the ocean. From birth to fifteen years much may be gathered there. He had touched, heard, seen, walked and breathed in that miracle world. She had been born by the sea but could not remember it, and all her world was forest, forest, forest. In old days, in Croatan Town, she and Miles Darling had experienced an eager wonder. "Tell us, Ruy, about Carthagena and Santo Domingo and Grenada and Cordova." They had not lacked home instruction as to the world that was not, or was only in small part, forest. Christopher Guest and Dame Cis and all the others had told them all manner of things. England and matters of England were household words. And in the very town of the Wolf Shawnees and all the years of captivity still Tom Darnel had talked and talked of a world he had not seen since 1587. Strange it was, how much she knew of, beyond the forest, over the sea—and yet she knew it as in a book, and all her own life was forest, forest!

But now when Ruy told of things that a quick, observant, poetic child and boy had touched and seen, it came alive to her, that life, and she vibrated with it. Oh, the ocean—oh, the city—oh, the great churches and the music and the pictures! Oh, the knights and the banners—oh, the horses and the ships! Oh, the many books—oh, the wise men talking! He saw it—across all his manhood in the forest, in a great glamorous dream, and she saw it

too, and it was a land of faery where she did not tire of walking with him.

But the present, also, was growing land of faery. The present and the past and the future were growing one Land of Faery. They spoke not a little of Miles Darling. But after a time it was Ruy who spoke most. And always praising him, he said in effect—"He is the bigger man of us two—the deeper, the wider and higher." But more and more Ruy gladdened her eyes, and she began to miss nothing in him.

It was so fair in the forest! There was such a color and such a light, and a fine, innumerable music. Danger—and many a time they met Danger—Danger only played into the hands of the beauty and wealth of Life. To be together in peril—each to fear for the other—each to rejoice for the other when Danger went by—the music deepened through that; Life deepened through that.

But always Eagle Feather saw before him a precipice—a cataract that seized and drew down and broke to pieces a frail canoe with a rower, and that himself—a tempest such as had wrecked the ship and drowned his father—Danger in final form, a vast shadowy figure that stooped and laid a hand like a cloud upon him and bore him away into dismal mountains, into snow and ice where he could only remember the fire, and kept him there forever! Danger! Danger for him alone.

They passed the high, rounded mound, standing

by itself in a little vale. Young Thunder said that an old people, long ago, before real men came, had made this mound, piling it over the bones of their chiefs. Now ancient trees grew upon it, descendants of ancient trees, and these, too, descendants. Undoubtedly, there were ghosts *here,* opined Young Thunder.

A wild storm delayed them. The forest groaned and wailed. They lay beside a huge fallen trunk, crashed down no further back than last year. A hemlock caught in the downfall bowed its close, dark green around them like a tent. They lay fairly sheltered while the tempest roared and through the sobbing night that followed. They lay close together, half under the vast trunk, the fine-wrought hemlock brushing them. When he put out his hand it touched hers or the braid of her hair or her doeskin dress. He did not sleep; he lay crying for time, time! before they should come to the cave. Or before Golden Hawk, walking steadily toward them, should meet them. *What if he never met them? What if they never went to the cave?*

That would not be possible with Young Thunder. Satan, this is Satan!

"Ah—aah—aaah!" raved the wind. Somewhere boughs struck together like madly clapping hands. The black rain went by like slanting spears. Virginia Dare moved, spoke in her uneasy sleep. "Miles—Ruy! Ruy!"

Morning broke, and all the storm was gone.

When they crept from their shelter they found the world all sun and shine, with more gold and red now on the ground than on the trees. They walked this day lightly and silently. It was so clear, the air; it was clear as crystal; they could see and hear afar and afar. But within, they could not see; there were whirling vapors. They could not hear, for all there was a low storm of music.

After this day there set in Indian Summer that always dressed in violet and dusky gold, weather that was as an opiate, plunging all folk and all things into a dreamy content. But Young Thunder had a brooding look out of which might be picked something like perplexity or anxiousness. He fell back, walked by himself. Eagle Feather glanced over his shoulder, then retarded his own step, until he was even with the Croatan. Before them Bright Dawn and Tom Darnel climbed a hill warm with red-leafed, red-torched sumac.

"Well?" queried Eagle Feather.

"You said, 'Turn south a little here. Make a great sweep between us and that Shawnee town we had trouble stealing by.' That was all right. I said yes. But it's two days now. Young Thunder say, time to get back to path!"

"It is easier going this way. We are bending east. The mountains and Croatan Town are before us, all the same."

"Mountains and Croatan Town, yes! But the cave and Golden Hawk—no!"

"Ah, but we shall come back to the path in time for that, Young Thunder! You know yourself that the hardest way was that straight one we took. A little longer time, but safer this way. A little longer time; that is all!"

"Golden Hawk will not know that. If he is not in the cave but on the path he may go over the hill where we turned and on toward the great river. *He* may have trouble with those Shawnees. He may now—now—be behind us, not ahead!"

"It is not likely. Not in the least likely. If he came to that place he would pick up our trail and see where it turned and would follow and come up with us. But he is not there. He is not yet ready to meet us.—Oh, presently, presently, we shall be back in the path."

"I do not like it," said Young Thunder with stateliness and was silent.

Ruy flared against him. "When did you begin not trusting Eagle Feather?"

The Croatan answered with dignity. "I trust Eagle Feather. I love him. But Golden Hawk is my brother since before we could bend a bow. Golden Hawk was my brother when we found Eagle Feather, a stranger, and took him to our lodges."

"Is he not mine too, foolish one?" demanded the other and turning hasted up through the red sumac to Virginia Dare, climbing toward the blue sky at hill top. As he went heart and brain throbbed,

"What am I doing? What am I doing?" And Old Sophistry answered, "A little time. Gathering a little, little time. That is all—quite, quite all!"

The day went by. They were deep among hills, and the leaves were falling fast, and all the aisles and vistas filled with purple haze. Virginia Dare said, "When you came this way, it was green, and I was waiting there with my turkeys and my piece of crystal. I was there and you were here. You could not see me and I could not see you as you passed this cliff. And Miles Darling in the cavern with the Shawnee medicine man."

"We did not pass this cliff." It was Young Thunder's guttural, but Ruy had taken her hand and they were climbing a rough defile and she did not hear.

Later, Young Thunder spoke again. "What are you doing? If we go this way, the cave will be over there." He gestured afar. "We shall pass it and *him*."

"No, no! There is time enough. When we turn that way we will go to it straight as an arrow."

"If he is not there? Maybe he goes yonder now, along that path we marked. Going away from us, looking for us."

"No. It takes long time for a leg so badly broken to get strong. He will wait for us in the cave, because that is the wisest thing to do, and he is wise."

"Yes, he is wise. Is Eagle Feather wise to-day? I think he is eating and drinking folly!"

"It is you who are foolish, Young Thunder!"

Virginia called, "Ruy! Ruy! Here is opossum, hanging by his tail!"

It was so lovely to laugh with her, to regard the curious animal feigning sleep or death, and with kindness leave him there. It was so lovely to walk with her among great trees, in the level gold rays, over the vast rustling harvest of leaves. Time, time—only more time! When their eyes met now, a thousand, thousand things were said. But not yet did her eyes say that which summed all other things, summing them and transcending them. Not yet did they say 'I love *only* you!' It was for that that he must gain time—must gain time.

Sunset and little camp fire and homely supper and good rest with now so many stars shining through the half-bare branches. Again Tom Darnel was very cheerful and sang,

> "'Away then the Sheriff and Robin did ride
> To the forest of merry Sherwood—,'"

"England! England!" spoke Virginia Dare. "Will England ever send and find us, as you and Miles found me? And if it found, how strange to come again to England! I who have never been there. I dread she would say, 'Ah, savage folk, ye are too out of tune here!'"

" 'Then the Sheriff did say, "God bless us this day
From a man they call Robin Hood!" ' "

"There is no land, England, Spain or other, you would not make more tuneful, Virginia Dare!"
Tom Darnel left Robin Hood,

" 'Lulla, lulla, lulla, lulla!
The falcon hath borne my mate away!

He bare him up, he bare him down
He bare him into an orchard brown.

In that orchard there was an halle
That was hanged with purple and pall—' "

After a time they slept, the large stars looking down through the fast stripping branches. When they waked in the morning Young Thunder was gone.

CHAPTER XXVII

RUY VALDEZ

"WE cannot be leagues from the cave," explained Ruy. "He can travel faster alone, and has gone on to Golden Hawk."

"He has been moody for two or three days. Why?"

"I do not know. Indians have those ways."

"Near! How near are we? How many days?"

"It is hard just to tell that in this wilderness. If we do not go astray—"

"Astray! But we must not!"

"No, of course.—It may be a week. Do you think of Golden Hawk each day?"

"Yes. Of Miles Darling. I remember him since I remember anything."

"In all things, except the mere blood, brother and sister. Of course you would see him, brother and playmate."

"A week. And you are sure that Young Thunder will be with Miles Darling?"

"Sure. Be careful! That log underfoot slips."

"We must have meat to-day," said Tom Darnel.

"I will be the hunter." He left them after awhile where they sat beside a smooth stream down

which floated argosies of painted leaves, and went deep into the forest to watch for deer or turkey. Before long he shot a great bronze red-wattled bird, but he let it lie beside him on the leaves while he sat on an oak root, his face buried in his hands.

Satan at his ear. "Satan! Is it Satan or my Genius—good somewhere, after all!

"What need ever to find the cave? Keep south by east and say to her, 'We have lost the cave.' Or no! When it is well passed, pick up that lesser cavern that we did pass, Miles and Young Thunder and I, two days before that falling tree. Tell her, 'This is it! They are not here—all things are cold—he has been gone many days. He has gone home, over the mountains, to Croatan for help. So we shall find him, or he us, at last!' Trouble, of course! But I can find signs for her. Young Thunder, too, will have gone on after him. So do we wander, wander, she believing that we come at last to Croatan Town, and by that time she loves me heartily, and what if we never come to Croatan Town? What if we wander south, and at last, after long time, come to Florida and a Spanish Town? I love her so and she loves me, and the other and all else dies away from her. Love can make a miracle like that and I have it. Oh, that love has me and I have it! O God, O God, O God!

"Deceive her—betray him."

He slowly lifted himself from the oak, took up

the game he had shot and returned to the sliding stream, the sailing leaves, Tom Darnel stretched out sleeping, Virginia Dare sitting watching the water and the fairy rafts. He sat down beside her. "Virginia—"

"Yes, Ruy."

"Of what are you thinking?"

"I do not know. Life and its strangeness, it's strangeness and beauty."

"Am I in your life wherever you look?"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

"You are in mine wherever I look. Oh, through and through mine!"

"How can we help it—all of us, lonely here in this world that is ours and is not ours?"

"It is more and other than that. Virginia, Virginia, Virginia!"

Her beautiful eyes swam upon him like rising orbs in a dark and still and tender night, then suddenly a great wave of color rose in her face. She drew sharp breath and starting up with a wave of her hand turned from the stream and the drifting leaves. After a moment she came back, but it was to say, "I remembered then—do you remember it?—May Day the year you went to war and the Shawnees took Tom and Shining Water and me. Remember! I was there again, and we danced around the May Pole." Her face was high and candid and rosy and marvelous, and her voice thrilled. "We danced holding great wreaths, and old Llewellyn played. I held white

fringe tree and you held honeysuckle and Miles had cedar and white dogwood. Miles! Why do we not find him, Ruy?"

He also was standing. "You wish that above everything?"

"Yes!"

"Then we will find him, Virginia Dare! Fringe tree and honeysuckle and cedar in company the one with the other. Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather and Bright Dawn. Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather—and to the best the best! It is the way that we were taught, and I suppose we must keep to it. And I have seen for three hours that I am too fond of Golden Hawk not to find him! Satan has been in the matter, but now one comes back to Christ."

That night neither slept. The next day they had a great alarm and barely, barely escaped detection and capture at the hands of a Shawnee hunting party. Hour by hour they lay hidden in a covert of young pines until again Danger went by. Hidden and silent like three Indians. In so much now they were Indian! Lying there, still and so watchful, every sense a sentry.

All day he felt her danger boded harm to her and at last purely rejoiced when Danger was gone. He wanted her good and her joy. Only so could he live. And behind that or within that uprose, too, the form and the eyes of Golden Hawk. "O Miles, Miles, I cannot tear from you either! For I love you also, and I love something that is neither

you nor Bright Dawn, or is both you and Bright Dawn, or perhaps is all that ever is or was or shall be!—The stars in the sky cannot go out, nor one live with Sorrow forever!"

The next day a wind blew and all the bright leaves were raining down. Now you could see afar in the forest and afar into the sky, and all was light blue and purple and dust of gold and a melody of wind and branch. He told her, walking, "We are out of the path. Young Thunder knew that we were out of it, and so he departed from us. But I can find it and I will!"

"How did it happen? You go so surely!"

"I was going unsurely. Some day I will tell you, but not now."

They walked over maple and hickory and dogwood and oak and linden and beech and birch and many another leaf. Their moccasined feet stepped lightly, but talk, talk, talk! went the ground beneath them. They saw great numbers of birds and the antlers of deer. A wind still sweet and warm pushed against them, but with an undertone of November. They walked in silence, each busy with thought or vision as it might be. Tom Darnel, a little to one side, was not wholly silent but matched the pattering wind with a pattering of his own, an undertone not especially meant to be heard by any. "Will Gosling and Ned Barecombe and John Goode—and they will not be young men any longer. Matthew Fullwood now

—he will be an old man, an old, Christian man! Mother Goode will be an old, old woman. And Master Christopher himself and Doctor Wren—not so young as they were, though hale. Dame Cis used to walk so light, and sturdy too, with a face like a rose and a deep, sweet voice. Susan—I always liked Susan—though she'd never marry but always wait for Sylvester Primrose. All of them—all that came out on the *Lion* and the *Rosemary* and the *Little Bess*. And we were forgotten, or left in the lurch, or Spain wins every cast and English ships no longer plough the sea. So we are left, and a-many are growing old. Tom Darnel himself!—Old England, and now it is almost Old Croatan. The trees and the river and Meshawa that is a Christian Knight with a red skin—the corn and the little paths and the pools where we fish—.

" 'God be with you, gray Palmer!
And now show me the sweetest warld whaur ye' hae been.'
'Hame!
'Hame, bauld hunter!
'Hame is the sweetest warld whaur I hae been!'

"Now where did I get that?" said Tom Darnel. "I must have gotten it from that Scots prisoner, thirty years ago. Anyway, it's true!"

He fell silent, but Virginia Dare, walking near, took up what he had sung. Her voice rang out in the purple wood, deep, sweet and rich.

" 'God be with you, gray Palmer!
And now show me the sweetest warld whaur ye hae been.'
'Hame!
'Hame, bauld hunter!
'Hame is the sweetest warld whaur I hae been!' "

That night Ruy woke out of sleep with a sense that Miles Darling had been standing near, was now but gone, vanishing not into the outward forest, as indeed he had not stood in the outward forest. Still there had he been, in some space! They had talked together, though in a deep and full and inward tongue. Reproach, confession, pardon, reconciliation. Miles and Ruy again, but a taller Miles and Ruy.

The night hung dark, a little chill and windy, with many stars. What Eagle Feather felt was cleanness, peace, half of exhaustion, half of new purpose, peace dashed with myrrh. That, and the knowledge that Life is more and other than he thought. It had been Miles certainly, but now it seemed to him that something had streamed through Miles and now lay collected in himself, something that was Miles-and-Ruy and exceedingly much beside. He did not understand, but he understood more than he had done. He did not love less, but he loved more and differently. There was sorrow, but it was sorrow and not despair.

First dawn filled the forest, mysterious, cool, pure, still and beautiful.

For five days they worked in a changed direction, Eagle Feather seeking the path. It was not easy to find. A clue presented itself, but after toil and following broke in the hand; another, and again it was false. Then suddenly they had it.

"This rock! See! I scratched an arrow and 'All's well!'"

"All's well! All's well!" She sat down upon the leaves and at first she laughed, and then the bright tears rained, and then she laughed again. Composure of the forest, of the Indian, of her own nature, returned. But there dwelled a light and a softness and a joy in her face.

It was nigh to dusk and they stayed here this night beside the sign. They built a fire and kept it longer than needed for the broiling of their fish, for now the nights were chill and they might wake in the morning to a world where the hoar frost sparkled. Tom Darnel too was most glad that they had recovered the path. "For we do not want to lose Young Thunder. And as for Golden Hawk—that would be England losing Saint George!"

Virginia Dare laughed, yet laughed as though there were much in the comparison. "Miles! Yes, he would arm himself and go forth after the dragon, very steadfastly if very gayly! And he would slay him—yes, I know that."

"Slay him and free the princess."

"So would you, Ruy! You freed me, who am not a princess."

"Miles Darling and Young Thunder and I freed you."

"Yes, all together. I know that. But each one also. We are all, and we are each. So I thank and bless you all and I thank and bless you each. I thank and bless Tom Darnel also—"

"Oh, if it comes to thanking and blessing," said Tom, "there is no telling where to start nor to end! And as for princesses, you are princess sufficiently, Virginia Dare, named for all of Raleigh's Virginia, and who have been Prophetess and nigh ruler for a long while in a savage nation!"

They covered their fire Indian fashion and lay down upon oak leaves and slept. The night went swiftly; here was dawn chill and gray, then slowly brightening. There was no cock to crow in the wide, wide forest, and the singing birds were gone south, but they waked because they were used to waking with the light. Close by ran a stream, and here Virginia Dare bathed, where alder and willow made a thick screen; and Eagle Feather, too, bathed, an hundred yards below where was a pool wide and deep enough for swimming. And Tom Darnel raked the coals of the fire and put twigs upon it, and broiled two pigeons. And they ate and broke camp and went on towards the east and the mountains and the cave.

They looked to find trace of Young Thunder who should be ahead of them, but they found none. It gave them uneasiness. Had he not found the path, or had something befallen? Was he behind

them or before? They did not know, but they must press on.

The trees had now yellow and red and bronze shreds and scarves, no more. The air hung still, a blue, a dream-like haze. When the wind blew it had a thin, violin note, but it did not often blow. There were great numbers—shoals and armies—of minute sounds, a perpetual patter and movement of leaves upon the earth or lightly striking the earth out of the blue space between bough and earth, the rubbing of boughs together, the cracking of twigs, the sound of water, the chatter of squirrels, the hop and flirt and cry of the birds that stayed, at interval the movement of heavier bodies, stag or bruin or badger or fox. And afar, afar off, in the thin, cool air, the horn of Winter might be heard to blow.

One day—two days—three. They rounded the shoulder of a hill and saw standing before them Golden Hawk.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WINTER

HE stood, tall, golden-haired, in the amber light. Something always breathed about Miles Darling, something like an atmosphere, rosy gold particles, inexpressibly swift. Something sure, something that rested.

His voice sprang forward. "Eagle Feather!"

All met. "So we've got you back, Jinny—Jinny! Virginia Dare! Lord God, you've changed and not changed—only all is bettered. Tom, Tom Darnel!—Where is Young Thunder?"

He listened. "Well, I think he'll come in. He's wise and bold. We'll not trouble yet. Three Shawnees came six weeks ago. I killed them after they had slain poor Totetha, but one of their arrows was poisoned and for a long while it gave me sore trouble. That is why I did not come toward you sooner. It is all gone by! I am as well as if God had healed me. I mean that He has."

They sat in a ring, and Virginia Dare's eyes were for Miles Darling, and Miles Darling's eyes for her. "O Virginia! you are become a Queen!"

Virginia thought, "Now I see a King!"

Eagle Feather narrated. These and these their adventures.

"I followed you with all my wishes," quoth Miles Darling. "Now and then, for all my body lay there in the cave, I came into your company. You and Young Thunder could not see me, but ah, I was there, Eagle Feather!"

Then began Tom Darnel upon a day now long ago when, being ever a great fisherman, he fished above Croatan Town, and would come home through the corn and found, by the boulder that marked the top of the field, Bright Dawn and Shining Water, and there was a hurt bird, and they followed it down toward the wood, and a great brush heap had been left at edge of forest.

For an hour they talked. Old adventures, a thousand, and again a thousand, rose in Tom's mind and in the mind of Virginia Dare. Some were fair and some were dread, and some had fun and some had sorrow. It seemed that they had been children and that they had been heroic man and heroic woman, Tom Darnel and the White Prophetess. But they did not know that. They told salient things, and they let many as salient go by untold. This led to that, and that to the other. Golden Hawk listened, and Eagle Feather listened.

The sun lay soft like a blessing hand upon the autumn world.

Here was as good a place as any to build their fire, eat their supper of venison, lie down for the

night. They found a sheltered hollow where they placed the dry sticks carefully in a round clear of leaves, for none wished to set the wide forest afire. In a ring, the four, and the great mother earth and father sky folding them, covering them.

They slept. The next day a high wind arose that set the forest shouting. It was at their backs; they went before it willingly, leaves with a bourne. At midday, Young Thunder overtook them. He had had his own adventure and great delay, but here he was, sound in wind and limb and grunting deep content. "Ho, Young Thunder!" and Miles' hand upon his shoulder. "Ho, Golden Hawk!"

At the halt he came to Eagle Feather, standing a little aside, his back to a tree. "All right and happy now! Tom Darnel says you said you had lost the path and must find it. So you looked and found and were coming straight. Young Thunder will say nothing to Golden Hawk of all that!"

"Thank you, Young Thunder," Ruy said simply. "But I told him myself this morning."

"Ha!" said Young Thunder. "What did he say or do?"

"He put his arm around me."

"Ah!" said Young Thunder, and looked through the pine trees at a great band of sunset, red and purple. After a moment he went away with an armful of pine cones for the fire. Ruy stayed, marking the sunset. Golden Hawk took Young Thunder's place. "Words never flow like a river

with me, you know, Ruy. It may be you, it may be me, who builds a house for her. Whichever it is, you are Ruy, I am Miles—kings still together!"

Virginia Dare also watched the sunset. She sat alone, for she could make it felt when she wished to be alone. A red bar and a purple bar, a red bar and a purple bar, and the dusk coming all around. Cloud sea, cloud islands. Shapes floated by in the ocean of her mind. Waves of feeling gathered, rolled and passed, and others took their place. At last, form and feeling, there was music, a deep music. Sadness and joys, partings and meetings, pain and bliss.—

She looked across and saw Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather. Seven years since that May Day —seven years—seven years. She had walked for weeks with Ruy in a colored, dreamy, happy forest. She could have gone on so had there been no Golden Hawk in the world—ah, yes, walked on with Ruy and been happy, as by moonlight! Only when the sun came—only when the sun returned—only when the sun came! She bowed her head upon her knees and the tears came out of her eyes.

The purple and red faded. Now the nights were cold in the forest. They kept up their fire, but even so the keen wind searched them. It was hurry, hurry, now they were all together, for no one wanted to meet the Old Woman Who Snows and her brother, the North Wind, in the high mountains.

A very little way from the cave, Tom Darnel said to Eagle Feather, "Feel my hands! I am shivering and then I am burning."

They got him there and he sank upon Miles Darling's bed of leaves and skins. For a month he was ill with fever, and when the fever was gone and he could be propped up and drink with shining eyes the broth they made him in one of old Totetha's clay-daubed gourds, outside, beyond the hemlock, a few large white flakes were falling.

The cave. It was safe, easily guarded, easily defended. It was warm. Young Thunder brought in fagots and fagots and heaped them in a dark recess. They had fire and torches for lighting. It was large, with arms and half walls of rock making two or three chambers. One of these was for Bright Dawn alone. It was shelter, and well they knew it would be wisdom not to forsake it till the days that were now so short had lengthened, and the Old Woman Who Snows took herself away to the north and the first birds flashed up from the south. Stay through the winter in Totetha's cave—Bright Dawn, Tom Darnel, Young Thunder, Eagle Feather and Golden Hawk. They held council. Yes, stay, and when the ice is melting and the winds breathe warm again make way over the mountains and home. It is best, and being best make it best!

Three months in the bent arm of winter. Tom mended, grew at last as well as any. He was cook

and man about the house. Something to find to cook was not always of the easiest. The hunters were gone for hours. When meat was found, a portion was dried by the fire and put aside in their store-room against worse need. They had a store of nuts, walnut and hickory, and Young Thunder brought in quantities of a certain root, very good to eat when pounded and boiled or baked. They had for covering the skins that Totetha had hoarded, they had his bowls and gourds. They blessed him often, the old medicine man, gone to the country of the Great Spirit.

The Great Spirit. Afterwards, looking back, it might be seen that the Great Spirit was with them, this winter.

He was there in their sense of beauty, in their quick and touching care for one another. He was there in a knightliness, and there in an exquisite, sacred, goddess quality.

He was there in a merriment, most rightly ordered as in a dance; there in a consented oblivion spread between them and all shapes of cark and care and question—spread like a beauteous, magic sward around their cave, in this winter that could not be helped but might be adorned.

He was there in many ways, with each and with all.

Sometimes they talked a very little of him. The Indian called him Great Spirit—Oonahleh Unggi. The others, God the Father and Christ the Son and the Holy Ghost. The one who had

been a child and boy in Spanish lands also called him Blessed Mother, and All the Saints.

Chiefly they went over and over again Croatan Town and all the loved who were there, and this remembered event and that adventure—beloved ramblings in a common realm. They never tired of this. They had a great common fund of allusion and reference. A word would start it, was all that was needed. Rich landscapes arose in which all moved. And then, seated about their fire, legends and tales arose, poems were said over, and they sang while the wind whistled without, the snow fell, the dark came around. Behind the Virginia wilderness and all their life therein stood English folk of the reign of Elizabeth. With these—with Guest and Cecily and Peregrine Wren and all the others—it was a passion not to let England, not to let Christendom, die from remembrance. They were bent that the sixteenth century of Europe should not perish, overlaid and smothered by primeval forest and the barbarian. They would grow old and die, but the children, the youth, that were springing up must know, must remember! It would be mixed with forest and barbarian life and ways and thoughts, but all the same, the lode of gold!

The children that they trained remembered. Outlawed beyond and far beyond Robin Hood and his meiny, their Sherwood Forest a vast salvage land in which England herself might be many times swallowed, their days and times for-

ever removed, their inner life altering to suit outer, yet were they in much Europeans, of the day of Shakespeare. What these children's children would do and become remained to be seen.

The Old Woman Who Snows snowed hard this winter. They were on the high threshold of high mountains; snow visited them often, made slopes of white about them, glittering, resting, melting, coming again. A long and cold winter. To many a tiny Indian village came this year the mournful clanging of famine. The five in this cave, in a wide, debatable land where were no villages, heard too, now and again, that clamor approaching. But always, when the larder stared empty, again they found meat. And no foe came against them, and, Tom Darnel recovered, all were well, and the great hemlock tree stood guard, and the white veils wrapped them and it around.

The Great Spirit provided them courage and gaiety. It was as though he said, "Put it aside till spring, that great matter you have to settle among you! Now you are beleaguered together; remember chivalry and live so."

They remembered, and the white winter went like a difficult, exquisite dance, done so well that the difficulty did not show. They were not conscious that they were dancing. They would have said, "It is life, and we are living as best we can."

CHAPTER XXIX

THE MOUNTAIN TOP

ALL the buds of the forest were swelling. The sky turned at times bright blue. Birds were returning—birds were returning—birds were returning. Totetha's cave lay far behind them. Mountains overhung. Their feet went up and over mountains. From the top of some great wave they saw a world of earth waves. Climb a wave, descend into the trough, climb another. The sea was wide, wide. Some of the waves were giants, others babes in this kind. Great and small they must be crossed, with the eastern sky before, the eastern sky and Cherokee Land.

The five bound for Croatan Town might move for hours in silence. To and fro among them went that swift, effective, sleepless language that is more and older and more potent than words. They did not need to say "Bright Dawn"—"Eagle Feather"—"Golden Hawk"—"Young Thunder"—"Tom." Nor did the adventures of the way claim that exclamation and comment in which amateurs might have indulged. They were forest citizens. As well might the deer have made a fuss! The way stretched rough and steep, but

they traversed it lightly, rarely needing, offering, or accepting hand over difficulty. When they came to rest they rested like the deer, completely.

Great trees, rotted logs, broken rock, cliffs, moss and fern and evergreen laurel. The trees had now a purple, misty look, with buds all swollen, thinking of catkins, thinking of leaves. They might mark, too, the stir of the animal world. Above the brown, the gray, the silver, the purple branches, they saw pigeons and blackbirds in great numbers. Everything was getting ready for May. The very lichened rock seemed to know, to have dim purposes ahead. The March winds blew, the April rains descended, silvery, warm; from a crest the five beheld a great, a very bright, double bow in the sky.

They stood upon a shining ledge, silent, watching it brighten and fade. An intense, clear band of sunlight garnered them; as it were, held them in a sheaf. In that illumination, Young Thunder almost nude, showed like an antique bronze. Tom Darnel, sinewy still but something bent, a trifle ageing, in leggings and shirt of buckskin, had an odd air of a gargoyle come to life, of an immortal juggler. With Golden Hawk, with Eagle Feather, stayed a kind of splendor. As for Virginia Dare, in her skirt and jacket of doeskin and her braided hair of dusk and gold, she was the forest woman, but she was more than that, more than fair youth and the forest woman. She

was the first English child born in Raleigh's Virginia; she was the hope of many, but there was more than that. To know her was to know a soul of good estate.

The rainbow brightened, faded, the sun set in splendor. A clear night followed, with the voice of spring not inaudible. They camped upon the mountain top, among a medley of huge boulders. Their fire had to-night a veritable chimney, they sat almost in a stone hall. The red light, the elfin shadows, danced. Something—the fact perhaps of their being so nearly enclosed in a house of stone—put them upon memories. They sat in a brooding silence, watching the fire upon the hearth. Golden Hawk lay stretched out in the amber light; he was long and clean of limb, gray-eyed and golden-haired, finely featured. Looking upon him, one felt power—power—power! He was of the immortally young—immortally wise and young. His power and his youth were human, but a day would come, however far, when they would beat up against the barriers, struggle and surmount. He was not a great talker—Golden Hawk—but to-night he talked. Looking into the coals there arose before him pictures, and he gave them voice. "I was three years old almost when we sailed from England. I did not know that I remembered this, but I remember it now! There's a stone chimney-piece with a carved shield, like those that Master Viccars draws. The fire burns and a man with a long

white beard sits in a great chair. I call him 'Grandsire' and he sets me upon his knee and tells me stories. Ha! and there is an old dog—Alexander! I remember. I called him 'Sand.'" His gray eyes glowed to match the fire.

"Remember again, Miles! Glad, glad, glad would I be if I could remember England!"

"You *are* England, Virginia Dare! You are England and Virginia."

"Did England ever dress like this, or live like this without cities or the sea or the ships? Yet, yes, yes, I am England! What else do you remember?"

"I remember a town. I know it is Plymouth and we are about to sail. There is a great, huge house with folk coming and going—horsemen and folk on foot."

"The Rose and Crown," said Tom Darnel.

"There's a garden and a great tree like the council tree. There's Susan. There's a table and fruit in a dish—plums—no, apples! There's mother. There's a pleasant, dark man— I did not know that I could remember my father, but to-night I do! Father! I'm glad I see you so plain. I run about the garden with Susan."

Said Tom, "All the gentles were there, at the Rose and Crown. Sir Walter and all. Alack! Alack! Old Plymouth Town!"

Miles Darling sat up. The fire lit the whole figure, strong, bronzed, in Indian dress. "And I remember the ship, the *Lion!* Matthew Full-

wood holds me in his arms and he says, 'Look! Yonder is the *Little Bess!*'"

"Old woe—old woe!" said Tom, and the tears were in his eyes. "Do you remember the massacre?"

"I remember mother waking me, and father taking me up. Yes, and a fire and shouting!"

"And afterwards?"

"I remember boats and Meshawa—and Virginia Dare."

"Oh, I was little, little! I remember when I was three or four and you were six or seven. It was my birthday. You brought me a coronal of feathers, red bird, blue bird, black bird, woodpecker, jay and robin."

"I remember. What coronal would I give you now? Something very rare and splendid!"

The eyes of Virginia Dare and of Miles Darling met. Something rare and splendid—supernal fire—leaped. The rocky chamber on the mountain top was quiet, save for the quiet singing of the fire of cones and twigs, and the wind of early spring. The fire sang, the wind sang.

Ruy Valdez spoke: "It has been nigh three years since any of us saw Croatan Town. If it is there still—Croatan Town! What will happen to it and to us all? Will we never, never, never, we who are not Indian, come out of the forest?"

"God He knoweth!"

"If we never do?"

"Is it so bad a place to live and die? Work and love and learn and live and die?"

"For you," said Ruy Valdez's heart with great bitterness. "But for me?"

Miles Darling turned to his comrade of all the years since they were fifteen. Ruy had not spoken aloud, but the other answered—answered with a certain light and daring and certainty in his face. "Work and love and learn and live and die and live again! For you and me and Virginia and Humphrey and Philippa—for Humphrey and Philippa. Philippa!"

It was Tom Darnel who said, "Philippa must be a bonny maid by now."

"Aye, bonny!" said Miles, her half-brother, and stretched himself out again, his arm beneath his head and his eyes upon the fire.

Tom spoke again. "Sometimes I used to dream we were marching to sea—, all of us—, a tribe! We had drums and trumpets—that was the way I dreamed—and all the Cherokees were helping, and if we met Spanish armies we hewed them down. But I always waked before I saw the sea."

"I used to think in the Shawnee town," said Virginia Dare. "Now, perhaps, there is a great Indian peace made, and the Cherokees have a clear road to the sea. Now, perhaps, with Meshawa all my people are going away from Croatan Town, back to the sea. They have given me up, me and Tom. They believe we are dead, long ago, long ago! Or perhaps English ships have come with

many men in them and perhaps those strange great horses, and they have over-traveled that vast way from the sea to Croatan Town. And they have taken all of us there away to the sea and the ships and England—and the stone house and every other is empty—and only the wind at night cries sometimes, 'Virginia Dare—Virginia Dare!' "

"Ah, no, not that!" said Miles Darling, softly.

"Ah, no, not that!" Ruy moved from the shadow. "What always it seems to me is this: Spaniards may come, from the sea or from Florida. Spaniards advancing the banner northward. Perhaps many together—"

"Spaniards may have won years ago, in that great sea and land fight you knew of, that kept Sir Walter from sending. That does not mean that they would always win! And are you utterly sure, Eagle Feather," said Golden Hawk, "that they won?"

"They who told me were utterly sure."

"Well! Well, let them come."

"Do they come," said Ruy, "here is one who is Spanish and English both! Then I might a little repay—"

Golden Hawk stretched out a hand and laid it upon Eagle Feather's. "You would do what a paladin might. A paladin and a peacemaker. I love you, Ruy!"

"And I love you too," said Virginia Dare, her frank, grave, lovely eyes upon him. "That night they brought you to the stone house—Miles and I

sat upon the stairs—and you lay overhead—and Doctor Peregrine said, 'He will live—and here's another friend and brother.' Friend, brother—brother, friend!"

Said Ruy's heart, "Ah, but I am lonely!" Then God said within him, "Find Me!"

The fire burned, the pine boughs crackled, the fragrant thin smoke curled upward to the stars. The boulders leaned around, like friendly walls. Young Thunder said, "Good place! I feel it. Great Spirit place!"

CHAPTER XXX

THE EVENING STAR

VIOLETS, bellwort and wake-robin were in bloom. The purple Judas tree and the silver shadbush made the forest all faery. The dogwood began to whiten. Birds in their legions sang in the key of passion; sang so sweet it was almost pain. Here were bees, here were butterflies, droning and flitting, an intoxication of life, life again, life new and fresh, sweet life again! The grape was budding, the grape flung high and low, over little trees and taller and tallest. The pink and the flame-hued honeysuckle dreamed of a few days to come, when they, too, should bloom. The earth steamed up in fragrance; all the mosses, all the ferns, all the colored fungi, even the lichens, cried, Spring! The wind sang, Spring! The released and fulfilled waters, the bursting sources and streams, sang it with rough and joyous voices. The trees, past all counting, trees like the sands of the sea, felt the sap running, leaves and flower and fruit in prophecy. The animals of the forest, deer and bear and fox and wolf and panther and all others in their species knew that it was Spring; every bird, every plant, every animate thing, knew

it. Spring, Spring, Spring! The air had the old, divine balm, the blue sky smiled, ancient, elusive, folding all.

The great mountains lay behind them, stretching across the sky, a gray, a blue and a purple wall. They were among lesser heights, mountains still but children beside the great backbone ridges. Down and over and through these they came into Cherokee Land.

Upon an eve all rose and amethyst they entered the first Cherokee village, a small, resounding place under a wall of black rock. When it was known who they were, great friendliness! This place could tell them no more than that there was peace, and that Meshawa of the Croatans had ever a greater name.

Feasting and ceremony over, good rest in clean lodges over, once more the forest received them; then in a day and a half, another village, a larger one, covering a hillside, above a musical water. Again a joy of welcome. Croatan Town? An Indian stood forth who had been there no further back than the past summer. A wonderful place, he said, and the white Cherokees were built forever into the nation.

Again the forest, but now a good Cherokee path. Another day, and at eve the third village, set in a high-floored valley like a gem. Once Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather and Young Thunder had spent a week in this place, and were well remembered. Sonorous now was their welcome,

and "Stay with us! Stay at least three days!" There was here a debt for old succor from danger, so they stayed, Golden Hawk, Eagle Feather, Young Thunder, Tom Darnel and Bright Dawn, and there was held a feast and the Dance of Welcome to Mighty Guests.

It was their own life, Indian life, about them. Naught in the polity was unfamiliar, all had been from childhood. Another culture—European—had been present, judging, warning, assenting, dissenting. But that culture in numbers was so small, so small! They had lived since childhood with Indian life as with water and air and earth and fire. Would they not live with it forever? Would it not come, more and more, to be their whole life, their veriest own? The question did not trouble them, in May-time, in the friendly village, or if it entered any head it was that of Ruy Valdez. But it was sweet to sit with friends in the still, cool spring evening around the fire, while the painted and feathered pipe went about and talk rose happily—and in the twilight, in the firelight, moved with Indian women one whom they called Bright Dawn.—In what did it differ, in what did it differ so mightily from England? Finer houses—better ways—but this was the forest and these were forest ways. Good ways, too! That was Tom Darnel thinking that. As for Golden Hawk, perhaps he did not think in that way at all. Nor perhaps did Bright Dawn—did Virginia Dare. They were themselves, and all

the world hung there in the star in the west, in the dusky and tender night.

The three days passed, and they took again their path. Cherokee Land—Cherokee Land—and behind them the piled mountains and around them the silken, the ardent, the colored, the passionate, the intense, laborious and austere spring. Song everywhere! and not from birds alone, but all Great Nature chanting as she worked. And now Home began its approach in their minds and hearts.

They thought that by this Home also might have rumor of them, so quickly did news travel in the forest by way of river or wind or wing of bird. Rumor of them, and looking eve by eve to the great star, and saying one to another in Croatan Town, "Are they under it? Are they coming?"

The forest bloomed. And Love bloomed in all the being of Virginia Dare and Miles Darling. On a certain eve they halted upon a slope of earth covered with magical great oaks. There was little undergrowth; one might wander at will over grass and moss, under the mighty arches. It had rained, then cleared; there spread afar, lifted afar, a sunset awful in its beauty. The very air among the trees was purple, gold and rose. Tom Darnel bent over the camp fire. Young Thunder took tobacco from his pouch, gave solemnly a pinch to the fire, and filled a small pipe of clay and wood. "Unngh!" grunted Young Thunder, watching the blue feather. A stream slid past the camp, now

in a long ripple, now in a leap, now in a mirror pool. Ruy Valdez, moving across to it, followed the winding bank to a great stone, took his seat there, and, his arms about his knees, watched the evening star. "Beauty! Oh, mournful, mournful and beautiful! Beauty hath opened her eyes. There is a bier and there is a resurrection."

Tom Darnel straightened himself. "There! 'Tis a pleasant, lively thing, fire! Yes, thank'ee, Young Thunder, I'll smoke a bit.—Golden Hawk and Bright Dawn walking yonder?"

"Yes. Light all round them."

Tom regarded the two, out among the oaks, moving toward the star. "She walks by him and he by her—and I mean that in a kind of figure as it were! He'll be a mighty man and she a mighty woman in this dim land that's far from all their forbears. I suppose there's purposes," said Tom, "pieces of pattern forever a-weaving, roses and coats-of-arms, that we don't see."

The sunset suffused the earth. Here were the slope covered with oaks, and the violet forest, and the distant mountains, and above these a many-hued sea, with bays and capes and islets, with minute, high-lighted ships, and pearl foam lines at the base of cloud cliffs. So often had they been told, "All that is like the sea, when it sleeps in the evening, close by the land!" The star burned over this sea in a heaven of clear blue.

Miles Darling and Virginia Dare stepped forth from the trees upon a horn of land. The oaks fell

away; here spread open grass, still, sunset-bathed. A little raised, they saw the endless forest and the endless sky and all the color. The air was cool, rain-washed, fragrant and very still.

The two, standing, gazed at the forest and at the star, then turning looked each into the other's eyes. Deep, deep, deep, deep, all life, past, present and to come! *"That ye may have life, and have it more abundantly."* They did not need nor use words. Surely, naturally, two parts of a whole came together. Their arms moved, they laid hold of each other and drew each other close; they embraced, her head fell back, he bent and advanced his face, their lips met in a long kiss. "Miles!" "Virginia!"—"Love—love—love—love! Oh, the star! oh, the music!"

They sat down upon the gray sward, and all the sea and all the ship of faery were for them, and the earth and the Spring and the stars in heaven.

Back by the camp fire, Young Thunder, having smoked, lay down and went, as was Indian wont, suddenly, deeply and thoroughly asleep. But Tom sat on, knees drawn up, and he saw pictures in the fire. It was an eve for pictures. Ships and towns and folk in crowds, streets and lanes and roads, bridges and towers and churches and processions, markets and play-houses and taverns, men and women, men and women, men and women. Ships and the water-side and little boats coming and going, soldiers passing and the Arms

of England upon a banner, taverns and taverns, shouts and laughter, brawls and clippings and a-many bells ringing. Pictures, pictures—sitting crouched before a little, lonely fire, in the wilderness of Virginia, by the stream, the frogs choiring.

Eagle Feather came softly from the great stone to the fire. He stood and watched Young Thunder sleeping and Tom Darnel sitting, lost in his pictures. Golden Hawk and Bright Dawn were not here. He knew, he knew, that they were yonder, under the sunset, under the star. He knew—the air to-night was eloquent of it—he knew that love was with them. He had had, there by the water, his bitter time. Now he stood like a man shipwrecked, who has drawn himself out of ocean and finds a shore beneath him, all destitute though he is. A shore—another life. He stood in the shadow, but the fire drew his eyes and he, too, began to make pictures. But his were of the future. Wilderness, wilderness, wilderness life, and how to set starry spaces where now was a black cloud. Set them and see them, or see them where they were already set. Life, the great Poet—

Miles and Virginia stepped into the ring of light. When he saw them he knew. They came to him. "O Eagle Feather, be happy too!" Miles' hands were upon his shoulders. "Why, in my way, Golden Hawk, I'm going to be! I am happier now than if I had kept on going away from the cave. There was no star then, but I make out one now.—Joy to you, Bright Dawn!"

Tom Darnel spoke from where he sat by the fire. "I've been thinking! Though you dwell in the wilderness yet you see and touch the world. There's a kind of inner road—"

The air was so clear, the sky that night so sown with stars that it was a marvel. It seemed that you could put up your hand and gather them. And all through the land was the fragrance of the wild grape. The birds waked them at dawn.

Another day, another night, another day. As they traveled eastward, full spring rang and sang about them. And now Home danced upon every sunbeam. Home was not London, not Devon, not the old City of Raleigh in Virginia, settlers' city by the sea. Home was Croatan Town, deep in the wilderness, at the base of mountains, where the red and the white lived together.

When now they met any red, these were friendly. "Croatan! Ha! It is Young Thunder and Golden Hawk and Eagle Feather!—Smoke, Croatan! Have you meat?—Your town? Everywhere your town has fame. Ioskeha, the Beautiful Spirit, smiles above it. It is made a Peace Town."

Wilderness—a wilderness, far from Europe and its pomp.—But if you are born in the wilderness, if you have lived in it since you were a little child? And the mind and the soul and the spirit go free anyhow.

The dogwood was in bloom. Far and wide the

dogwood was in bloom. All fairy land, clad in white, appeared in the dark wood.

Not many leagues—not many leagues—not many leagues from home. A day or two—a day or two! The red birds, the blue birds, the mocking birds, the thrushes, sang it.

They passed through a glade and came into an aisle of forest. This turned, and they met suddenly with a shout of welcome four men from Croatan Town, Strong Swimmer, Great Owl, Christopher Guest and young Humphrey, his son.

THE END

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